

AN INTEGRATED MODEL FOR
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

A THESIS

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DEDICATION

It is with heartfelt love and sincere gratitude that I dedicate this thesis to my husband, partner in ministry, and best friend, Kevin Jones. His unconditional love and support, together with his sacrificial giving of time and resources, have contributed greatly to the completion of this doctoral program.

Additionally, I wish to dedicate this thesis to my mother, Olive Lalonde, whose modeling of love, respect, endurance, and determination has contributed to the person I am today.

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ABSTRACT

The proposed model is an integrative approach to marriage and family therapy embracing concepts, techniques, and processes from Family Systems Theory and Bowen Family Systems Theory. Unique to this integrative approach is the inclusion of a biblical understanding of persons. An in-depth biblical anthropology is presented in chapter two, with an informative literature review in chapter three. A case study is presented in chapter four, which is discussed therapeutically in chapter five.

Chapter 1

Integrative Model

Introduction

The internal complexities of individuals and the interpersonal dynamics of familial relationships are multifaceted. “Human beings are complicated, thinking, feeling, and acting creatures, who exist in a complex system of biological, psychological, and social influences” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 423), and as such require a family therapy model that acknowledges and considers each of these domains in an integrative fashion. Concepts generally employed in family therapy are borrowed from multi-disciplinary fields such as “biology (systems), physiology (homeostasis), cybernetics (feedback), psychosomatic medicine (the social context of illness), community mental health (the therapeutic community), anthropology (structuralism, functionalism, the participant observer), and social work (the social context of problems)” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 110). The purpose of this chapter is to propose an integrative model that will employ concepts from each of these disciplines.

It is essential that this integrative model recognizes and comprehends the family as a social unit, or a system, and yet addresses cognitive, affective, behavioral, spiritual, and relational aspects of the individual members, and is able to identify the relational factors that contribute to the character and personality of each person. Additionally, when conducting family therapy, it is imperative to understand individual members in the larger context of the family in order to fully understand circular causality.

Three elements are included in this integrative model, which are (1) Family Systems Theory, (2) Bowen Family Systems Theory, and (3) a biblical understanding of

persons. The component from family systems theory that will contribute to this model is systems thinking, wherein it provides a construct for understanding the manner in which systems work. Bowen Family Systems Theory is a therapeutic model that compliments systems thinking in a practical way and helps in comprehending the functionality of human relationships within a systemic framework. It views the family as a system without minimizing the individual member's integrity, and acknowledges system dynamics insofar as multigenerational influences and nuclear family processes as well as acknowledging that change in one person can trigger change in the whole system.

A biblical understanding of persons is complementary to the above two elements and provides an accurate understanding of anthropology.

These three elements, systems thinking, Bowen family systems therapy, and a biblical understanding of persons contribute to the proposed integrative family counseling model. One way to think about these three elements in a complementary way is by imagining systems thinking as the skeleton, Bowen Family Systems Therapy as the flesh on the skeleton, and biblical personhood as giving life to the human being. A brief introduction to each of these elements follows.

Family Systems Theory

One of the foundational elements of family is structure, “how it arranges, organizes, and maintains itself at a particular cross-section of time ... [and a second element is process] ... the way it evolves, adapts, or changes over time” (Corsini and Wedding, 2000, p. 376). In this view, the family is perceived as a system, “a complexly organized, durable, causal network of related parts that together constitute an entity larger than the simple sum of its individual members” (Corsini and Wedding, 2000, p. 376). The

relational interactions between the components, or individuals, that are part of the larger context, or the family, and the system's harmony and arranged structure are of interest therapeutically (Corsini & Wedding, 2000).

The conceptual roots of family systems as a theory have three contributing components, Functionalism, General Systems Theory, and Cybernetics. A brief introduction to each follows.

Functionalism

Anthropologist Gregory Bateson brought systemic ideology into psychotherapy with the concept of functionalism, which suggests, "the adaptive value of any activity can be found if the behavior is viewed in the context of its environment" (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 110). Functionalists serve as ethnographers, or participant observers, studying cultures contextually in order to effectively understand an activity within its larger context. Accordingly, in order to appreciate and comprehend an activity's meaning, it is essential to observe it functionally within the systemic context (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). In terms of family therapy, this idea is useful wherein it sheds light on the symptom's function within the family. Awareness and understanding of the symptom's function within the familial context can provide the therapist with a larger construct of how this particular symptom contributes to family adaptation.

General Systems Theory

The second major contributor to family systems theory is General Systems Theory, posited by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1968. As a biologist realizing the interrelatedness of organs in the endocrinal system, he speculated that this application was transferable to other disciplinary areas from the human psyche to the physiological

atmosphere (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Pursuant to these observations, he inferred findings to multifaceted social systems and developed this theory. Because von Bertalanffy perceived general systems theory more as an approach, or a way of thinking rather than a theory as such, he fully intended to call it general systems teaching, however, through a mistranslation, it was labeled general systems theory (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Confronting reductionism, “he emphasized that real systems are open to, and interact with, their environments, and that they can acquire qualitatively new properties through emergence, resulting in continual evolution” (Heylighen, 1992, p. 1). Rather than entitative reduction to the elemental property, systems theory focuses on the organization of and the relationship between the parts that form the whole. For example, while the human body is comprised of elements such as organs, cells, water, and blood, the arrangement of and the interaction between the parts bond them into a whole human body, or holism (Heylighen, 1992). It is this organization, or system, which is greater than the sum of its parts, that interacts with its environment.

The impact of General Systems Theory on family therapy is found in the areas of interaction, equifinality, homeostasis, and perspectivism.

Cybernetics

“Cybernetics was developed and named (from the Greek word for helmsman) by Norbert Weiner, a mathematician at MIT” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 116). As a result of his work with military armament relative to guns hitting moving targets, he extended the idea systemically and developed the concept of cybernetic systems, or “systems that are self-correcting” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 116). The conception of

the feedback loop, “the process by which a system gets the information necessary to self-correct in its effort to maintain a steady state or move toward a preprogrammed goal” is the central thought in cybernetics (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 116). Negative feedback tends to maintain the status quo, reducing difference or movement away from the system’s homeostatic state, whereas positive feedback promotes and augments change in the system.

Bateson, upon encountering Wiener’s cybernetic conceptualization, was instrumental in formulating a major shift from linear to circular causality relative to family therapy. This change resulted in systems thinking insofar as psychopathology as a product of current circular feedback loops rather than as the result of a former life event. The application for family therapy that cybernetics has concentrated on pertains to the area of feedback loops that maintain the system’s homeostatic state through the idea of family rules (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Table 1.1 contains terminology and definitions regularly encountered when describing systems thinking.

Table 1:1 Systems Terminology	
Open system	An organic system that continually interacts with its environment
Equifinality	The organism’s ability to safeguard and reconstitute its wholeness
Homeostasis	System regulation in response to environmental change
Perspectivism	The filter through which events are interpreted
Cybernetics	Systems that self correct
Family rules	Explicit and implicit rules that govern the way the system behaves and operates. Rule can be explicit, implicit, purposive, functional, dysfunctional, immediate and situational, historical and transgenerational, sourced in and transmitted by one or more members, prescriptive or proscriptive, perceptual, and have general or specific applications

Family roles	The role each member of the system takes on, some are expected, some are to maintain homeostasis
Negative feedback	Enforces rules and reduces change
Positive feedback	Amplifies change
Metacommunication	Communicating about the way the system communicates
First order change	Change in the system while maintaining the family rules
Second order change	Change in the family rules
Circular causality	contrary to linear causality, refers to the way each member's behavior is caused by another member and in turn causes another member's behavior
Structure	The way the system is organized
Process	How the system evolves, adapts, and changes

Source: Nichols & Schwartz, 1998. Family Therapy Concepts and Methods. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. p.109-118.

Bowen Family Systems Therapy (BFST)

Psychiatrist Murray Bowen, a leading figure in family therapy, developed a “theoretical-clinical model that evolved from psychoanalytic principles and practice” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 142). His family of origin experience, personal analysis, professional training, and therapeutic experience with patients provided him with the theory, knowledge, and experience to formulate BFST (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

“Bowen family systems therapy has by far the most comprehensive view of human behavior and human problems of any approach to family treatments. It extends the focus deeper into the hearts and minds of family members and broader into the wider family context that shaped, and continues to shape, the life of the family” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 141).

This model focuses on the way in which a family system functions emotionally. The major theoretical formulations in BFST are differentiation, triangles, nuclear family emotional process, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, sibling position, emotional cutoff, and societal emotional process (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Bowen centered on the idea of “anxious attachment, a pathological form of

attachment driven by anxiety that subverted reason and self-control. Anxious attachment is the opposite of functional attachment, which is a central aspect of differentiation” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 142).

Differentiation

Differentiation from one’s family of origin is the primary concern for BFST (Charles, 2001). Basically defined, it is “autonomous functioning” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 144), meaning that persons can remain emotionally connected to their family of origin without fusion; have an awareness of their family of origin influence and yet be comfortable enough with themselves to choose to behave differently; and possess and maintain their own perspectives and value systems (Hertlein & Killmer, 2004). It is the idea of being separate but not cut off, “two counterbalancing life forces: togetherness and individuality” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 144). It is a harmonious sense of maintaining individuality and investing in togetherness, or relationship, concurrently without isolation or enmeshment.

Papero (1990) defines differentiation as follows:

The term differentiation is borrowed from biology and suggests an analogy to cellular development. From essentially the same material cells develop, or differentiate, to perform separate yet related functions in the organism. The comparison with the development of the individual in the family is illustrative of the goal of remaining in viable emotional contact with the family yet retaining the ability to function with responsible autonomy. (p. 47)

Further, differentiation has two facets, intrapsychic and interpersonal, which operate concertedly. The first, intrapsychic differentiation, refers to the internal workings of the individual whereby one has the ability to separate and balance the affective (subjective feeling) from the cognitive (objective thinking) processes (Jenkins, 2005). Individuals with poor intrapsychic differentiation are generally unable to discriminate thoughts from feelings resulting in a powerlessness to think objectively (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998), characterized by fused affective and cognitive domains resulting in a life organized around and dominated by the emotional sphere of influence. These persons lack flexibility, adaptability, and emotional independence (Gibson & Donigian, 1993). Conversely, those with higher intrapsychic differentiation levels possess the ability to distinguish feeling from intellectual processes and are able to include the use of I-positions while sustaining self in the midst of anxiety-producing situations (Peleg-Popko, 2001).

The second is the interpersonal aspect, which is the ability to experience and maintain intimacy between self and others without jeopardizing one's autonomy; the ability to experience autonomy from and yet intimacy with others (Peleg-Popko, 2002). Interpersonally, persons with a poorly differentiated self tend to exhibit behaviors focused on pleasing others, to the extent of modifying thinking and opinions to assimilate because blending in with the group feels more comfortable than standing alone. Conversely, persons who are well-differentiated interpersonally have the assurance, confidence, and capability to think objectively and to act assertively when voicing opinions even in the face of difference or opposition (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Differentiation levels impact persons in psychological and physiological areas, with low levels resulting in physical, emotional, and relational problems. Poorly differentiated persons, due to an inability to handle stress, are susceptible to “greater levels of chronic anxiety”, which can potentially lead to physical symptoms (Peleg-Popko, 2002, p. 357). Some of these symptoms include “somatization, depression, alcoholism, ... psychosis”, and stress-related illnesses (Peleg-Popko, 2002, p. 357).

Differentiation is both an individual and family variable, affecting not only the individual, but influences the family system as well. “There is empirical support for the theoretical conceptualizations that link family differentiation levels to the anxiety of offspring” inasmuch as higher differentiation levels produce lower levels of trait anxiety and physical symptomatology in adolescents, and visa versa (Peleg-Popko, 2002, p. 357). The higher the differentiation level, the higher the psychological maturity resulting in overall better family functioning. The intensity and magnitude of differentiation levels were also linked to dysfunction internally within the family system, as well as externally in friendships and school related activities (Peleg-Popko, 2002, p. 357).

Numerous studies support BFST relative to a connection between low differentiation and poor emotional, psychological, and physical health, compared with higher differentiation and better overall health. Studies assert that low self-differentiation is correlated with co-dependency (Gibson & Donigian, 1993), psychological reactance (Johnson & Buboltz, 2000), social anxiety and symptomatology (Peleg-Popko, 2002), psychological distress (Murdock & Gore, 2004), and the homeless population (Hertlein & Killmer, 2004). Comparatively, in an empirical study of fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) sufferers, higher levels of self-differentiation correlated with lower stress levels and less

						and asserting myself.
1	2	3	4	5	*17	I have had to leave an intimate relationship(s) where my partner needed to define who I am.
* = reverse scored						

Source: Licht & Chabot, 2006. The Chabot Emotional Differentiation Scale: A Theoretically and Psychometrically Sound Instrument for Measuring Bowen's Intrapsychic Aspect of Differentiation. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, April 2006, Vol. 32, No. 2, p.167-180.

Skowron and Friedlander (1998) developed a Differentiation of Self Inventory, see table 1:3 below, that measures “both the intrapsychic and interpersonal components, that is, the thinking-feeling and separateness-togetherness dimensions” (p. 236).

Table 1:3 Differentiation of Self Inventory							
These are questions concerning your thoughts and feelings about yourself and relationships with others. Please read each statement carefully and decide how much the statement is <i>generally true</i> of you on a 1 (nor <i>at all</i>) to 6 (<i>very</i>) scale. If you believe that an item does not pertain to you (e.g., you are not currently married or in a committed relationship, or one or both of your parents are deceased), please answer the item according to your best guess about what your thoughts and feelings would be in that situation. Be sure to answer every item and try to be as honest and accurate as possible in your responses.							
		Not at all true of me				Very true true of me	
1		1	2	3	4	5	6
2	People have remarked that I'm overly emotional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	I have difficulty expressing my feelings to people I care for.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I often feel inhibited around my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	I tend to remain pretty calm even under stress.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	I'm likely to smooth over or settle conflicts between two people whom I care about.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	When someone close to me disappoints me, I withdraw from him or her for a time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	No matter what happens in my life, I know that I'll never lose my sense of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	I tend to distance myself when people get too close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	It has been said (or could be said) of me that I am still very attached to my parent(s).	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	I wish that I weren't so emotional.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	I usually do not change my behavior simply to please another person.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	My spouse or partner could not tolerate it if I were to express to him or her my true feelings about some things.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Whenever there is a problem in my relationship, I'm anxious to get it settled right away.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	At times my feelings get the best of me and I have trouble thinking clearly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	When I am having an argument with someone, I can separate my thoughts about the issue from my feelings about the person.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I'm often uncomfortable when people get too close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	It's important for me to keep in touch with my parents regularly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	At times, I feel as if I'm riding an emotional roller coaster.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	There's no point in getting upset about things I cannot change.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	I'm concerned about losing my independence in intimate relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	I'm overly sensitive to criticism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	When my spouse or partner is away for too long, I feel like I am missing a part of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	I'm fairly self-accepting.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I often feel that my spouse or partner wants too much from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	I try to live up to my parents' expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	If I have had an argument with my spouse or partner, I tend to think about it all day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I am able to say no to others even when I feel pressured by them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	When one of my relationships becomes very intense, I feel the urge to run away from it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	Arguments with my parent(s) or sibling(s) can still make me feel awful.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	If someone is upset with me, I can't seem to let it go easily.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I'm less concerned that others approve of me than I am about doing what I think is right.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	I would never consider turning to any of my family members for emotional support.	1	2	3	4	5	6

33	I find myself thinking a lot about my relationship with my spouse or partner.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	I'm very sensitive to being hurt by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My self-esteem really depends on how others think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	When I'm with my spouse or partner, I often feel smothered.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37	I worry about people close to me getting sick, hurt, or upset.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38	I often wonder about the kind of impression I create.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39	When things go wrong, talking about them usually makes it worse.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40	I feel things more intensely than others do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41	I usually do what I believe is right regardless of what others say.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42	Our relationship might be better if my spouse or partner would give me the space I need.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43	I tend to feel pretty stable under stress.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Differentiation of Self Inventory Subscale Composition (underlined means reverse scored):							
Emotional Reactivity: J_, 6, _10,14, _18, 21, 26, 30, 34, 38, 40; I Position: 4, 7,11, 15, 19,23,27,31,35,41,43							
Emotional Cutoff: 2, 3, 8, _12,16, 20,24, 28, 32,36,39,42; Fusion With Others: 5,9, 13, 17,22,25,29, 33, 37							

Source: Skowron, E.A. & Friedlander, M.L. (1998). The Differentiation of Self Inventory: Development and Initial Validation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1998, Vol. 45, No. 3, p.246.

Scazzero (2006) presents a list of fifteen “false self symptoms” that may also be interpreted as indicative of differentiation levels; a person with a low level of differentiation would tend to answer these questions positively whereas a well-differentiated person would tend to respond with a negative answer.

Table 1:4 False Self-Symptoms	
1	I say “yes” when I really mean “no.”
2	I get depressed when people are upset with me.
3	I have a need to be approved by others to feel good about myself.
4	I act nice on the outside, but inside “I can’t stand you!”
5	I often remain silent in order to “keep the peace”.
6	I believe that if I make mistakes, I myself am a failure.
7	I avoid looking weak or foolish for not having the answer.
8	I criticize others in order to feel better about myself.
9	I have to be doing something exceptional to feel alive.
10	I have to be needed to feel alive.
11	I am fearful and cannot take risks.
12	I do what others want so they do not get mad at me.
13	I use knowledge and competence to cover my feelings of inadequacy.
14	I want my children to behave well so others will think I am a good parent.
15	I compare myself a lot to other people.

Source: Scazzero, P. (2006) False Self Symptoms [Electronic Version] Retrieved September 24, 2007. http://www.newlifefellowship.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/feature.display/feature_id/602/index.cfm

Triangles

Triangulation is triadic interaction, a three-unit emotional relationship system. The unit consists of two persons with a third element, often a person, but sometimes a non-animate object or an activity. When a two person emotional system encounters anxiety, it can become tense and unstable. As a countermeasure to anxiety, the person in

the emotional system who is experiencing more discomfort or anxiety will involve a third person, object, or activity, in the hope of easing the tension between the two persons.

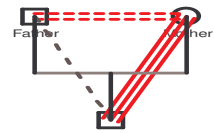
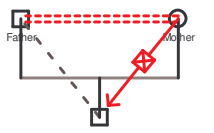
While spreading the tension may ease it and bring temporary stability to the system, it does not solve the presenting conflict. Rather than bringing resolution, it postpones and retains the conflict. Interestingly, low self-differentiation and anxiety invite triangulation (Papero, 1990).

Friedman (1985) describes the seven laws of emotional triangles, as follows:

Table 1:5 Seven Laws of Emotional Triangles	
1	The relationship of any two members of an emotional triangle is kept in balance by the way a third party relates to each of them or to their relationship
2	If one is the third party in an emotional triangle, it is generally not possible to bring change (for more than a week) to the relationship of the other two parts by trying to change their relationship directly.
3	Attempts to change the relationship of the other two sides of an emotional triangle not only are generally ineffective, but also, homeostatic forces often convert these efforts to their opposite intent.
4	To the extent a third party to an emotional triangle tries unsuccessfully to change the relationship of the other two, the more likely it is that the third party will end up with the stress of the other two.
5	The various triangles in an emotional system interlock so that effort to bring change to any one of them is often resisted by homeostatic forces in the others or in the system itself.
6	One side of an emotional triangle tends to be more conflictual than the others.
7	We can only change a relationship to which we belong.

Source: Friedman E.H., 1985. Generation to Generation. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Six examples of family triangulation involving a mother, father, and male child are as follows:

Table 1:6 Family Triangulation		
Basic Triangulation	Spouses in open conflict/tension with one parent (mother) pursuing an over-involved relationship with a child, resulting in a fixed distance between the child and the other parent (father) and a decrease in the original spousal conflict/tension.	
Parent-Child Coalition	Spouses in covert conflict/tension with one parent (mother) pursuing an alliance with a child against the other parent (father) resulting in a fixed distance between the child and the other parent (father), and a distraction from the spousal covert conflict/tension.	

Parentification	A child is co-opted into an overly intense emotional/functional relationship with a parent (mother) in response to the emotional/physical absence of the other spouse (father).	
Split Loyalty Coalition	Spouses in overt or covert conflict/tension, with each one pursuing an alliance with a child against the other parent, often resulting in a loyalty bind, which can only be resolved in a fixed distance between the child and both parents.	
Detouring-Attacking (Scapegoating)	Spouses in covert conflict/tension “attacking” a “problem/bad/delinquent child”, distracting themselves from the spousal conflict/tension.	
Detouring-Supportive	Spouses in covert conflict/tension over-focusing a “sick/incompetent/needy child”, distracting themselves from the spousal conflict/tension.	

Nuclear Family Emotional Process

“Bowen theory hypothesizes that the degree of unresolved attachment or undifferentiation between parents and a child influences how well the child functions through life”, affecting both individual and relational functioning (Klever, 2003, p. 431). This can lead to unstable emotional fusion in the marriage relationship resulting in relational patterns of distance, dysfunction, conflict, or projection, causing intense problems within the family system (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

This process repeats the pattern in terms of perpetuating similar dysfunction in the individual’s nuclear family (Klever, 2003), with both genetics and learned behaviors as contributing factors. Interestingly, the “symptom area – physical, emotional, or social – tends to be transferred from the multigenerational family to the nuclear family” (Klever, 2004, p. 338). According to Klever (2003), an individual’s low level of self-

differentiation with parents and family of origin will influence and impact current behavior and functioning within one's nuclear family.

Family Projection Process

This is a process wherein a parent, due to lack of differentiation, conveys and imparts personal emotional struggles and problems to a child. A parent becomes intensely focused on one of the children, who becomes enmeshed with the parent and less able to differentiate. This invites the parent to further intensify the focus onto the child and the child ultimately develops the psychological need for the parent to continue the behavior, which perpetuates this circular process (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

According to Papero (1990), this dynamic is not exclusively human, but is observed in the animal kingdom as well.

Such interlocking sensitivity and reactivity between mother and child can be seen in other life-forms. Jane Goodall reports on the relationship between a chimpanzee mother, Flo, and her son Flint (Goodall, 1979).

Although Flo appeared to be an excellent mother and had produced older children who become dominant animals in the chimpanzee community, her relationship to Flint was different. They were unable to accomplish weaning, with Flint clinging to his mother well past the usual age when young males join their adolescent peers. When Flo died in Flint's eighth year, Flint survived her by three and a half weeks. (p. 59)

Multigenerational Transmission Process

This process describes differentiation over multiple generations. All the children in any given family will learn behaviors and emotional reactions from the parental system

resulting in similar differentiation levels. However, the child who is most fused with the parental system will develop a lower level of differentiation and the child who is the least fused with the parental system will develop a higher level of differentiation than the parents. As these children mature and marry individuals with similar differentiation levels, the process repeats itself, eventually rendering remarkable differences in the differentiation levels over the next few generations (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Several longitudinal studies using qualitative and quantitative methods from Klever (2003, 2004, 2005) support BFST as it relates to intergenerational fusion or undifferentiation, and symptomatology impacting nuclear family functioning.

Sibling Position

Sibling position, or birth order, is hypothesized to predetermine an individual's personality tendencies in terms of the nuclear family emotional process. Additionally, while individuals who grow up in the same sibling position across families may predictably have common characteristics, they can function differently according to their particular level of differentiation (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Emotional Cutoff

Emotional cutoff is the result of non-differentiation from one's family of origin. Individuals can distance, or cutoff, themselves geographically by moving away or emotionally by avoiding certain personal topics. The result is the same; the conflict remains unresolved (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). While cutoff is due to emotional and relational problems, it can affect a person in the physical realm as well. According to Murray et al (2006), there is a correlation between individuals who experience emotional cutoff with more intense symptoms of fibromyalgia syndrome.

Societal Emotional Process

Another influence that families contend with is the emotional climate of society, whose emotional mood directly and indirectly affects the family's emotional processes. Because an extended upsurge in societal anxiety can create higher anxiety levels among families, lower differentiation levels in individuals and families can result (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

While Bowen articulated eight major theoretical formulations, it is clear that differentiation is the central concept that either affects or is affected by the other seven. According to Bowen Family Systems Theory, differentiation is of paramount importance having the ability to influence various aspects of one's life as well as impact future generations.

Normal Family Development

"In BFST there is no discontinuity between normal and abnormal family development ... [however] ... all families vary along a continuum from emotional fusion to differentiation" (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 149). Optimal family development consists of well-differentiated family members with low levels of anxiety, with the parental system in good emotional standing with their respective families of origin. Family members who are well-differentiated are able to distinguish the cognitive from the affective domain while retaining intimacy in familial relationships (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Carter and McGoldrick (1988) suggest it is essential to look at three generations in order to understand a family's interactional dynamics at any given time. The stages within the family life cycle are where changes in the relationship system occur.

Negotiating within these stages is referred to as a first-order change; while there is some reorganizing, the system basically remains intact. However, negotiating from one stage to the next causes the system itself to change and is referred to as a second-order change (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Table 1:7 Duvall's Stages of the Family Life Cycle	
Stage	Developmental Tasks
1. Married couples without children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishing a mutually satisfying marriage - Adjusting to pregnancy and the promise of parenthood - Fitting into the kin network
2. Childbearing families (oldest child birth – 30 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having, adjusting to, and encouraging the development of infants - Establishing a satisfying home for both parents and infants
3. Families with preschool children (oldest child 2 ½ - 6 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting to the critical needs and interests of preschool children in stimulating, growth-promoting ways - Coping with energy depletion and lack of privacy
4. Families with children (oldest child 6 – 13 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fitting into the community of school-age families - Encouraging children's educational achievement
5. Families with teenagers (oldest child 13 – 20 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balancing freedom with responsibility - Establishing postparental interests and careers
6. Families launching young adults (first child gone to last child's leaving home)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Releasing young adults with appropriate rituals and assistance - Maintaining a supportive home base
7. Middle-aged parents (empty nest to retirement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rebuilding the marriage relationship - Maintaining kin ties with older and younger generations
8. Aging family members (retirement to death of both spouses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coping with bereavement and living alone - Closing the family home or adapting it to aging - Adjustment to retirement

Source: Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 124. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

BFST asserts that “one of the most important ways in which the family creates an environment supporting the successful transition into adulthood of offspring is the degree to which parents help their children balance their need for individuality with their need to remain emotionally connected to the family” (Peleg-Popko, 2002, p. 355). According to Peleg-Popko, (2002) this assertion has been subjected to testing, and he reports his findings as follows:

There is empirical support for the theoretical conceptualizations that link family differentiation levels to the anxiety of offspring. For instance, Skowron and Friedlander (1998) reported that higher levels of

differentiation predicted lower levels of trait anxiety and less physiological symptoms. Gavazzi and Sabatelli (1990) reported that family differentiation levels significantly predicted psychological maturity levels in adolescents, while Gavazzi and associates (1993) found family differentiation levels to be significantly related to both adolescents' psychological maturity and problematic family functioning levels. Furthermore, Gavazzi (1993) found correlations between differentiation levels and differences in severity levels across a spectrum of presenting problems, including difficulties in family systems, school-related problems, friendship difficulties, individual-oriented problems and illegal activities. It was also reported by (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1992) that family differentiation and peer support were significant predictors of adolescents' depression levels, and that family differentiation predicted adolescents' levels of fears, worries, trait anxiety, and state anxiety (Gavazzi et al., 1993; Gavazzi, Goettler, Solomon, & McKenry, 1994; Tuason & Friedlander, 2000). (p. 357)

Behavior Disorder Development

According to BFST, individual and relational symptomatology is caused by stress and anxiety. "Symptoms develop when the level of anxiety exceeds the system's ability to bind or neutralize it" (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 152). Differentiation level is directly correlated with a person's capability to handle stress and therefore remain symptom free. The person with a higher differentiation level is better equipped to handle stress in relationship than the less well-differentiated individual. When a less than well-

differentiated two-person system experiences stress, the relationship will seek to triangle to relieve the stress.

Nichols and Schwartz (1998) note:

Behavior disorders in adults ... result from emotional fusion transmitted from one generation to the next ... emotional fusion consists of anxious attachment, overtly expressed or reactively rejected... both the clinging, dependent person and the aloof, isolated one are equally caught up in emotional fusion; they merely manifest it in different ways. (p. 153)

Fusion is a correlative of differentiation, and the poorly differentiated person is similar to the fused person wherein acceptance and approval are substantially important, eventually leading the individual to exhibit relational patterns of distance, dysfunction, or projection (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Therapy Goals

Optimal family functioning is attained when the system's anxiety is low, individuals in the family system are well differentiated, as well as each parent being well-differentiated from his or her own family of origin. "Also, the necessary changes must take place in the self (first-order) as well as in the larger system (second-order) as conflicts do not inhere in the person, but in the family system" (Charles, 2001, p. 280).

According to BFST, process and structure are the main elements of therapy. "Process refers to patterns of emotional reactivity; structure refers to patterns of interlocking triangles" (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 156). Authentic adjustment and change involve revisiting previously intimately barren relationships with the hope of building emotional closeness. Deconstructing triangles is another change in the family

system that will bring increased levels of differentiation for both the individual and the family system. Because family members are encouraged to view the problem as systemic in nature and are not personally labeled as the problem, they are invited to view change as systemic rather than personal (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

For genuine change to occur, the marital triangle needs to be altered. The Bowenian therapist is an integral part of this process. The therapist joins the triangle assuming an emotionally neutral position whereby enabling the couple to detriangle and differentiate, which in turn will dramatically transform the family system overall because change in one triangle will bring about systemic change (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Behavior Change

The Bowenian therapist plays an integral role in family therapy in terms of setting the therapeutic tone and attitude of the session, and role modeling low emotional reactivity so as to avoid triangulation. Relating one-on-one with family members, rather than encouraging family dialogue, in an effort to enable reflection of their own particular tendencies within the family system that will either maintain homeostasis or effect needed change, is an important aspect of BFST (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Bowen firmly believed that one or two persons could effect change in an entire family system. While he agreed that individual members are integral parts of the social context of the family and believed change can happen within that context, he maintained that change effected by one person could not only have systemic ramifications but may be more the norm for systemic change. While all family members could be present in the session, it was not necessary. However, having an awareness of the whole family was of necessity. In effect, the Bowenian therapist's client could be an individual working on

self-differentiation and building relationship with all family members. This is an example of one person changing an entire family system (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Going home is a unique aspect of BFST. This occurs when adult clients become well-differentiated and are able to return to their family of origin responding in an emotionally healthy manner. This is a powerful and transferable dynamic wherein it not only enables and empowers them to respond differently in family of origin relationships, but will positively affect all their relationships (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Techniques

BFST is by no means a short-term model. The therapist is not engaged to fix a problem, but to encourage lasting change that affects all the client's relationships. This happens only when the individual makes internal changes. This is called process, and the Bowenian therapist is adept at using process questions that will allow clients to think about different aspects of the problem, including their own role in the dysfunctional patterns.

Bowen was comfortable doing family therapy whether the client was an individual, a couple, or a family. He believed that the family's presence, physically or in awareness only, was enough to effect systemic change. While a person's journey toward increased differentiation is beneficial for that particular individual, it has systemic ramifications. In the process of differentiating an autonomous self, the person is involved in either beginning or modifying relationships within the extended family, which automatically brings change to the family system (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

A number of the BFST techniques are psycho-educational in nature, some include role modeling, and some are intentionally directed toward individuals in the couple or

family session in the hope of emphasizing systemic awareness and minimizing anxiety. Techniques include the use of a genogram, the therapy triangle, relationship experiments, coaching, the “I” position, multiple family therapy, and displacement stories (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

“Genograms are schematic diagrams of families, listing family members and their relationships to one another. Included are ages, dates of marriage, deaths, and geographical locations” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 165). These family diagrams organize family data and are key in highlighting relational dynamics such as triangles, geographical distance, intergenerational patterns and themes.

When conflicted couples and families enter therapy, in an effort to reduce anxiety, they will automatically endeavor to triangulate the therapist. It is important that the therapist only enter the triangle assuming an emotionally neutral manner so as to promote change and empower the clients to do the much needed work of reconciling differences.

A relationship experiment serves to highlight the emotional processes of the system so that family members can attain an understanding of the system. Individuals are encouraged to take an alternate stance in the session. Fogarty’s illustration includes “emotional pursuers and distancers. Pursuers are encouraged to restrain their pursuit, stop making demands, and decrease pressure for emotional connection ... distancers are encouraged to move toward the person and communicate personal thoughts and feelings” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 174).

Coaching involves helping clients gain understanding about both self and system, and foster functional rather than anxious attachments to others in the system. This is accomplished through the use of family process questions (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Taking the “I” position is having the ability to identify and express one’s own thoughts and feelings. It is a direct way of speaking wherein one talks about personal thoughts and feelings rather than using an accusatory tone and blaming stance. The therapy session is opportunistic for the therapist to role model the technique (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Bowenian multiple family therapy involves working with couples. The therapist dialogues with one particular couple while the other couples listen. As a psycho-educational tool, it was Bowen’s belief that the couples listening could learn about emotional processes through observation, while assuming an objective stance precisely because they were not emotionally involved in the transaction (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Guerin’s technique of displacement stories, another psycho-educational approach, involves “showing films and videotapes and telling stories, to teach family members about systems functioning in a way that minimizes their defensiveness” (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998, p. 174). This would enable persons to watch with an objectivity that would enhance their learning.

Biblical Understanding of Persons

While a more comprehensive treatment of biblical anthropology is found in chapter two, an abbreviated biblical understanding of persons is needed at this point.

First, humankind are created beings, that is, the creation of persons was “intentionally and carefully planned, meticulously and directly executed” (Puffer, 2007, p. 47) by God, the result of which God described as “very good” (Genesis 1:31 NIV).

This declaration denotes and affirms humankind's worth and "infinite value" (Guernsey, 1990, p. 5) to God.

Second, "the image of God is inherent in the makeup of all individuals" (Puffer, 2007, p. 47), having an impact on the essence and relational capacities of humankind. Humankind are social beings created with the "potential to develop a capacity to love" (Leffel, 2004, p. 136) due to "God's communicable attributes [of] love, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, truthfulness, and kindness" (Puffer, 2007, p. 48).

Third, because eternity has been placed within the human heart, a drive to discover life's meaning and purpose impels persons toward an existential, and oftentimes spiritual, quest.

Fourth, the creation account indicates "the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Genesis 2:25). However, one result of the Fall is the shame factor. On describing shame, Johnson (2005) asserts:

Many humans struggle with a conscious awareness of shame and guilt, and most humans possess an unconscious sense of same. Shame, in particular, fosters an avoidance of self-examination and the assumption of responsibility, fear of others and of "being exposed," and defensiveness and aggressive anger; it keeps people from reaching out to others; and it is associated with most forms of psychopathology. (p. 83)

God created humankind in his image, affording and affirming great worth, value, and relational capabilities. As a result of the Fall, humankind struggles with issues of self-worth, shame, fear, and anger resulting in internal and relational conflict.

It is the intent of this integrative therapeutic model to provide an understanding of personhood according to God's creation. As a result of the Fall, there are emotional and relational consequences basic to all humankind. BFST presents a framework for understanding emotional processes and functionality of individuals and families. Systems thinking provides the circular construct through which to view interactional dynamics.

Chapter 2

Biblical Anthropology

Introduction

Familial ideology has its origin in God, therefore the necessary point of departure for accurately understanding the nature and essence of family must be rooted in theology. Prior to addressing familial relationships, a discussion on theological anthropology is necessary. Cameron (2005) asserts that a theological anthropology cannot be accurate simply by considering and examining the horizontal human connection, it must include the vertical connection to God. God's divine revelation through his written word, the bible, reveals God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, in addition to who humankind is in relation to the Trinity. The bible contains teaching about God and humankind, and "enquiring further about God, we deepen our understanding of human experience" (Cameron, 2005, p. 53).

This is the story, told by God himself in Scripture, his own Word. God himself has told his story so that humanity might understand its own story. Within his story, there is our story, the story of what he intended us to be in creation, the story of what we have become through sin, the story of what he still intends us to become through salvation. Human experience with all its complexities and ambiguities, is viewed from the standpoint of the biblical story, which is both the story of sin and the story of glory, the glory of divine salvation. The biblical story is the story of creation, sin, and salvation. This is the story which informs our theological understanding of human experience. (Cameron, 2005, p.54)

In order to fully understand the story of creation, sin, and salvation, this chapter will address five fundamental aspects of a theological anthropology: (1) Creatureliness, (2) Co-Humanity, (3) Imago Dei, (4) Sin, and (5) Sexuality. A discussion on each of these aspects follows. Further, covenantal marriage, theology of the family, and a theory of change are addressed.

Creatureliness

Persons are created beings, created by God, therefore “the human person does not exist autonomously or independently, but as a creature of God” (Hoekema, 1986, p. 5). “Creatureliness is an undifferentiated field upon which the occasion of the human occurs” (Anderson, 1982, p. 21); this creatureliness is observed on a continuum of human and non-human life, with human life, the person, differentiated from non-human life in terms of self-consciousness, awareness, and freedom.

Additionally, persons are in a covenantal relationship with God. This unconditional “covenant of grace” is both unilateral and bilateral; unilateral in the sense that God alone initiates the covenant, and bilateral in terms of persons fulfilling the covenantal responsibilities in order to “enjoy the blessings of the covenant” (Hoekema, 1986, p.9, 10). While it is through God’s grace alone that salvation is possible for created persons, there is an individual and personal response required.

Co-Humanity

The concept of “co-humanity” (Balswick & Balswick, 1999) describes the interactional relationship between persons. As a person interacts with another, both become an integral part of the other’s story, therefore, “personhood is always expressed

contextually” (Sheriffs, 2005). Stories of personhood happen in dynamic actions, interactions, and reactions between persons.

Imago Dei

Hoekema (1986) asserts that persons are to mirror and represent God because he reveals himself uniquely through humankind making it possible for others to hear God’s word and experience God’s love through human encounter, stressing that humankind “is” the image of God rather than “has” the image (p. 18). “Understanding what it means to be ‘created in the image of God’, involves learning what God is like. This, according to the Christian faith, involves turning our attention to Jesus Christ” (Cameron, 2005, p. 57).

We learn about the image of God by looking at Jesus’ love for God and love for humankind. According to Hoekema (1986), three notable aspects about Jesus are relevant to a discussion on the imago Dei and personhood. These are (1) he was wholly directed toward God as can be seen in John 4:34 and Matthew 26:39, (2) he was wholly directed toward the neighbor, as is evidenced in Luke 19:10, Mark 10:45, and John 15:13, and (3) he ruled over nature as is recorded in Mark 4:38-41, Matthew 14:22-33, and John 21:1-14. Created in God’s image, humankind is positioned in these same three relationships wherein, to be a human being means to be directed toward God, directed toward neighbor, and to rule over nature (Hoekema, 1986).

First, to be a human being created in God’s image for relationship means that the primary relationship of importance is the vertical one toward God the creator. Created for fellowship with God, humankind is dependent upon and responsible to God. Created beings must essentially find self-worth, significance, and fulfillment primarily in relationship with God and it is God’s intent that humankind respond to him in love, trust

and obedience (Hoekema, 1986). When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus replies with a relationally focused response “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37-40). “It is vital that a relational theology be rooted in a biblical understanding of relationship that reflects the heart and mind of Jesus” (Flood, 2000, p. 3), and focuses on love as foundational.

Second, to be a human being created in God’s image means that persons are created for fellowship with one another because “the human person is not an isolated being who is complete in himself or herself, but that he or she is a being who needs the fellowship of others, who is not complete apart from others” (Hoekema, 1986, p. 76). In the book of Genesis God declared that it was not good for Adam to be alone, and made a suitable helper for him. While this is inclusive of male/female relationships, it is not exclusive to these relationships but enfolds all relational dynamics common to persons in order to be complete as social beings (Hoekema, 1986). Significance and fulfillment are also intrinsic to human relationships, especially family, friends, and companions. It is only in relationship that persons are able to discover who they are and how they relate, what their strengths and growth areas are, as well as establish, advance and develop emotional and spiritual health. Use of individual giftedness, sharing burdens and helping one another in altruistic and unselfish ways, should be the motivating factors for love and acceptance of one another.

Third, to be a human being means to rule or have dominion over nature.

As God is revealed in Genesis 1 as ruling over the whole creation, so man is pictured here as God's vicegerent, who rules over nature as God's representative. Having dominion over the earth, therefore, is essential to man's existence. He is not to be thought of apart from this dominion, any more than he should be thought of apart from his relationship to God or to his fellow human beings. (Hoekema, 1986, p. 78-79)

Hoekema's (1986) exegesis of Genesis 1:28 describes what ruling, subduing, and having dominion over nature means.

... explore the resources of the earth, to cultivate its land, to mine its buried treasures. Man is called by God to develop all the potentialities found in nature and in humankind as a whole. He must seek to develop not only agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry, but also science, technology, and art. In other words, we have here what is often called the *cultural mandate*: the command to develop a God-glorifying culture.

Though these words occur as part of God's blessing upon man, the blessing implies a mandate (Hoekema, 1986, p. 79).

Cultural mandate implies that humankind is to rule and have dominion over the earth for God and to develop a "God-glorifying culture" (Hoekema, 1986, p. 14).

As individuals inhabit and engage in these three particular aspects that reflect the image of God, they are functioning as God intended. The following table illustrates Hoekema's (1986) discussion regarding humankind's "structural and functional" (p. 68) aspects of the *imago Dei*.

Table 2:1 Creation/Fall – Structure and Function	
Creation	
Structural: What kind of being man is	Functional: What man does
The entire endowment of gifts and capacities that enable man to function as he should in his various relationships and callings, rational powers, fellowship, moral sensitivity, response, make decisions, sense of beauty, speech, song	Living in right relationship with God, neighbor, and creation, concretely visible sanctification. Man's proper functioning in harmony with God's will for him.
The Fall	
Structural aspect is retained	Functional aspect is lost Use them in sinful ways
Salvation (functioning is primary; structure is secondary)	
Structural aspect is retained (means to fulfilling the task)	In principle, structure is potentially restored wherein persons are now enabled to use their God-reflecting gifts in such a way as to image God properly

Source: Hoekema, A.A. (1986). *Created in God's Image*, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

In creation, the original image that Adam and Eve possessed consisted of sinlessness in terms of obedience to their God, love for one another, and ruling over and caring for nature. However, “they were not yet fully developed image-bearers of God; they should have advanced to a higher stage where their sinlessness would have been unlosable. At the stage where they existed, there was still the possibility of sin” (Hoekema, 1986, p. 82). Because they chose sin and rebellion, this original image was perverted. The perverted image comprised of a functional change in their relationship with God, one another, and nature. Idol worship replaced worshipping the one true God and manipulation and selfish ambition replaced loving relationships with one another. Their natural inclination was now toward self-praise resulting in arrogance. In terms of ruling over and caring for nature, humankind would now exploit and use resources for selfish reasons and personal gain. Because the structural aspect remains intact, humankind now uses God-imaging giftedness in sinful ways (Hoekema, 1986).

Because of the redemptive work of Jesus and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the marred image of God in humankind is being restored in those who accept God's offer of salvation. This allows relationships to be restored to proper functioning where persons can love, serve, and worship God, love one another, and tend to, care for, and properly use resources for the benefit of others. As well, persons are empowered to think, talk, and live in a new way, and use God-imaging giftedness in ways that honor God (Hoekema, 1986). The goal of redemption is that humankind be conformed to the image of Christ. While the process of restoring God's image in humankind is progressive, the perfected image, or final glorification will happen only in eternity on the new earth. Patterned after Christ, humankind will experience full restoration in all three previously marred relationships, God, one another, and nature (Hoekema, 1986).

Humankind's self-image was also perverted as a consequence of the Fall. The original self-image has been replaced primarily in one of two ways, (1) pride, thinking of oneself more highly than one ought, or (2) shame, the negative self-image from feeling ashamed (Hoekema, 1986). However, in Christ, this self-image is also being progressively renewed in several ways. As new creatures in Christ, pride is being replaced by love and humility through the use of personal giftedness, used for the sake of God and others. Through justification and sanctification, one is able to view oneself in the light of God's gracious work of forgiveness and renewal, forging a positive self-image because "the Christian life involves not just believing something about Christ but also believing something about ourselves" (Hoekema, 1986, p. 110).

In Christ, being renewed in and restored to the image of God results in transformation, both internally and externally. It is evidenced in structure, who persons are, and function, what persons do.

Sin

As a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience, sin entered the world rendering all humankind fallen with an inclination toward evil. Adam and Eve were "created in a state of integrity but fell into a state of corruption through an actual event that occurred in time ... this means that sin is accidental, not essential" (Hoekema, 1986, p. 117) to humankind.

Hoekema (1986) notes that sin brings with it a "deep sense of shame ... fear ... [and an] evasion of responsibility" (p. 133). Shame is evidenced by Genesis 3:7 "... the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked" whereas previously in Genesis 2:25 "the man and his wife were both naked, and felt no shame" (NIV, 1996). In the narrative, shame prompts them to sew fig leaves together to serve as coverings. Adam and Eve's next reaction is fear, they hid themselves from God because they were afraid (Genesis 3:8b). Both evade responsibility for their actions as Adam blames Eve (v.12) and Eve blames the serpent (v.13). God cursed the serpent and the ground but he judged and sentenced the man and woman, resulting in pain in childbirth for the woman and painful toil for the man.

Because humankind's structure was not lost in the Fall, giftedness remains intact. However, the functionality, or use of those gifts is perverse, used in rebellion against God, making sin particularly heinous (Hoekema, 1986).

Table 2:2 Essential Character of Sin		
1	Sin is always related to God and his will	1 John 3:4; Romans 8:7
2	Sin has its source in what Scripture calls “the heart”	Prov.4:23; Jer.17:9; Matt.15:19; Luke 6:45b
3	Sin includes thoughts as well as acts	Matt. 5:28; Gal. 5:16,17,24
4	Sin includes both guilt and pollution	Matt.6:12; Romans 3:19; Romans 1:18
5	Sin is at root a form of pride	Gen. 3:5
6	Sin is usually masked a) committed for “some good reason” b) often fail to recognize our own sin c) often tend to cover up our sins	Gen. 3:6 Psalm 19:12; Psalm 90:8 2 Sam. 12:1-15, Psalm 32:3,4

Source: Hoekema, A.A. (1986). *Created in God's Image*, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

While sin is a spiritual category, it negatively impacts morality. The result of sin is (1) a pervasive depravity, which is a corruption that extends to all aspects of human nature, and (2) a spiritual inability rendering humankind unable to meet God's approval, fulfill God's law, and to turn from sinful self love to love for God. God through Jesus reveals sin to us insofar as knowledge of sin is a predicate of knowledge of God. This is because there is no natural knowledge of sin, no knowledge of sin apart from grace. The human heart, including the will, reason, affect, and discernment, is corrupted because of sin. No aspect is unaffected and no one aspect can rescue the others. The will is bound; persons cannot will themselves out of sin. While they may be able to will moral good, they cannot will spiritual good, or righteousness. The affect is disordered and misaligned, loving what one should hate and hating what one should love. Because the integrity of reasoning was lost in the Fall, reason now subserves sin. God's wrath is his love reacting to sin, meeting humankind in their sin. Genesis 3:15 points to God's response of grace to sin, wherein there is a promise of the coming Redeemer, with the remainder of the Bible serving to unfold this promise (Hoekema, 1986). While fallen short of glory and away from their true nature into the bondage of sin, humanness was not lost. However, while

this humanness precludes the capacity to reconcile themselves to God in any salvific sense, it is instrumental in enabling persons to accept and respond to God's offer of salvation.

The ability to choose and make choices is presupposed in persons, as it is an aspect of the *imago Dei* wherein persons have the ability to respond and are responsible for their decisions. "The ability to choose is a *sine qua non* of all human life [without which] "responsibility ... dependability ... planning ... education ... religion ... worship ... art ... science ... [and] culture" (Hoekema, 1986, p. 229) are precluded. Therefore, the ability to choose is foundational in life.

The freedom given to Adam and Eve in creation was the ability to make choices that would be pleasing to God, and they were able to do this due to their created state of integrity. However, this freedom that enabled them to live in agreement and harmony with what was pleasing to God was lost in the Fall. While they did not lose their ability to make choices, they did lose their "ability to live in total obedience to God" (Hoekema, 1986, p. 232) because they were now in bondage to and influenced by sin. Because sin is accidental and not essential, redemption for humankind is possible by God's grace displayed through Jesus Christ. For regenerated persons, sin is not their nature but rather a perversion of their nature. While sin resides in them, it need not rule over them. Because of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the freedom to do what is pleasing to God is restored, meaning that the redeemed now possess the ability to choose to do what is pleasing to God. Further, Jesus modeled how a spiritually alive person can function in a fallen world.

Anderson et al (2000) provide a list of statements with scriptural evidence of who the redeemed are in Christ.

Table 2:3 Who I Am In Christ	
I am accepted in Christ	
John 1:12	I am God's child
John 15:15	I am Christ's friend
Romans 5:1	I have been justified
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord and one with him in spirit
1 Corinthians 6:20	I have been bought with a price; I belong to God
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of Christ's body
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint
Ephesians 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child
Ephesians 2:18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit
Colossians 1:14	I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins
Colossians 2:10	I am complete in Christ
I am secure in Christ	
Romans 8:1-2	I am free forever from condemnation
Romans 8:28	I am assured that all things work together for good
Romans 8:33-34	I am free from any condemning charges against me
Romans 8:35,38-39	I cannot be separated from the love of God
2 Corinthians 1:21-22	I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God
Philippians 1:6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected
Philippians 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven
Colossians 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God
2 Timothy 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind
Hebrews 4:16	I can find grace and mercy to help me in time of need
1 John 5:18	I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me
I am significant in Christ	
Matthew 5:13-14	I am the salt and light of the earth
John 15:1,5	I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of his life
John 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am God's temple
2 Corinthians 5:17-20	I am a minister of reconciliation
2 Corinthians 6:1	I am God's coworker
Ephesians 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms
Ephesians 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength

Source: Anderson, N., Zuehlke, T.E., Zuehlke, J.S. (2000). *Christ Centered Therapy*. Zondervan Publishing House, MI: Grand Rapids.

Because the above statements are scriptural truths, redeemed persons do possess the ability and freedom to choose to function in obedience to God.

Sexuality

According to Genesis 1:27, God made them male and female, which is the “fundamental anthropological structure” (Fuchs, 1983, p. 42) of humankind. “Sexuality is not an unfortunate accident, but rather the high point of God’s creative act: man is not only created other than the world and other than the animals, he is created in God’s image – in a structural relationship to someone other than himself” (Fuchs, 1983, p. 38, 42). Human sexuality is primarily about relationship, a disclosing of the self and the other in complementarity. As such, it is not simply about mating and procreation, but is essentially the intimate encounter or meeting of two persons (Anderson, 1982, p. 106). “The intimacy which Adam and Eve felt was an ability to be themselves without any pretense” (Balswick, 1999, p. 31). Intimacy in terms of knowing the other was emphasized.

Anderson (1982) asserts, “intimacy is intensified by otherness” (p.105). This applies to relationships between persons as well as between God and persons. “The goodness of the union between man and woman reflects the goodness of creation, for sexuality is the sign of differentiation, of the otherness by which God reveals His own otherness” (Fuchs, 1983, p. 50).

Marriage

The creation narrative describes God’s concern about Adam’s aloneness as a social being.

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman ', for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (Genesis 2:18-25)

The husband and wife union was blessed by God, followed by the command to "be fruitful and increase in number" (Genesis 1:28), implying marriage (Hoekema, 1986). The concept of marriage is the foundation upon which society is built, and is central to its structure. "The Protestant Reformers believed that the covenant of marriage was not just one social institution among others, but rather ordained by God as one of the primordial 'orders of creation,' alongside and equal in importance to the church and the state" (Wall & Miller-McLemore, 2002, p. 259). Fuchs (1983) agrees that the man and woman, or

husband and wife, relationship is fundamental and central, and as such is the “basis for all other possible relationships [and] the basis for all social life” (p. 188).

Torrance (n.d.) describes marriage as having a deep foundation in God’s creativeness and redemptive work, and is archetypal as the basic unit of the Church or the body of Christ. As the basic unit of creation, man and woman joined together, one flesh, reflect the image of God. The man and woman, being equals, are dependent upon and supportive of each other, an interdependent relationship (Hugenberger, 2004). The woman, Eve, was created to help Adam obey God’s command in Genesis to “be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (1:28).

As a result of the Fall and the introduction of sin, all relationships, between human persons and God, between human persons and nature, and interpersonal, were damaged, creating internal and social disorder. The new covenant brings with it a restorative element wherein marriage can be reinstated to its original place in creation because of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Further, the apostle Paul compares one flesh marriage to Christ and the church in Ephesians 5:21-33, noting it is a “profound mystery”. In this way, marriage reflects Christ and the church.

Hugenberger (2004) describes the covenant of marriage as triangular, with the man at one apex, the woman at another apex, with God, as the witness to the marriage, at the third apex. In response to God presenting the woman, Adam’s words to God are “this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman’, for she was taken out of man” (Genesis 2:23). These words, Adam’s marriage vows, are viewed as a “covenant-making formula” (Hugenberger, 2004, p. 25).

To leave one's family and cleave to one's wife is indicative of covenant, and means that one's wife takes precedence over all relationships including family of origin, friends, and employment. "In Genesis 2:24, God says that when a man enters marriage, his former greatest loyalty, which was to his parents, is now to be demoted in order that his wife may take first place" (Hugenberger, 2004, p. 26). As well, Deuteronomy 24:5 states, "if a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married" (NIV, 1996, p. 142). In terms of cleaving, Hugenberger (2004) notes the following:

More significant, however, is the fact that "cleave" is often used in covenant contexts to summarize Israel's obligation to be loyal to the Lord, as in Deuteronomy 4:4. There Moses reminds Israel that although the Lord judged those who followed Baal of Peor, "all of you who cleaved [NIV: held fast] to the Lord your God are still alive today." Likewise, Deuteronomy 13:4 insists, "It is the Lord your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and cleave [NIV: hold fast] to him." (p. 26)

Family

The opening chapters of Genesis depict the creation of humankind in God's image, the concept of connection through marriage involving a man and a woman, and the idea and structure of a family, a social unit living together in relationship. The American Heritage Dictionary defines family as "a fundamental social group in society typically consisting of one or two parents and their children" (Dictionary.com, 2008).

Guernsey (1985) asserts, “the family has always been a social institution” (Anderson & Guernsey, 1985, p. 6), and as such should be viewed and understood through that lens, focusing on relationships.

Balswick and Balswick (1999) understand theology of the family as based on God’s relationship throughout both the Old and New Testaments. God as father in the Old Testament and Christ as groom in the New Testament are paradigmatic examples of relational love in action. God’s relating to Israel in the Old Testament as a parent is characterized by love, care, response, discipline, respect, knowledge, and forgiveness. Christ relating to the Church reveals “the unconditional love modeled by Jesus gives a picture of the type of communicative intimacy desirable in family relationships” (Balswick & Balswick, 1999, p. 33). “Family relationship, whether parent/child, husband/wife, brother/sister, or any other special bonding relationship are reflections of the covenant relationships that exist within the Godhead and are reflected in the relationship between God and humankind and between human persons as they are created ‘in the image of God’ ” (Anderson & Guernsey, 1985, p. 47).

Guernsey and Anderson (1986) suggest that because covenant love serves as the foundation for the family, the meaning of family is “much more than consanguinity, where blood ties provide the only basis for belonging. Family is where you are loved unconditionally, and where you can count on that love even when you least deserve it” (p. 40). “The central point of covenant is that it is an unconditional commitment which is demonstrated supremely by God in the role of parent” (Balswick & Balswick, 1999, p. 22). Covenant love is exemplified by God forming and sustaining relationships with humankind, therefore, family life predicated on a covenantal model is based on love,

grace, and forgiveness. Behavior based on covenant principles, such as loving, caring for, and being considerate of family members, leads to intimacy. True intimacy involves knowing and being known by the other, demonstrated in Adam and Eve's pre-Fall relationship with each other and with God. Able to be themselves, there was no pretense in relationship. However, shame, a consequence of the Fall, hinders authentic relationships wherein persons can fear knowing others intimately and being known by others intimately, creating pretentiousness and deception. Through Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, family life based on a covenantal model is possible, enabling family members to communicate and behave in authentic and healthy ways facilitating intimacy without shame and fear.

Change

Change is often difficult and seldom embraced. Even for individuals, couples, and families who openly acknowledge their problems, it seems, at times, they tend to cling to the behavior that debilitates, incapacitates and causes unhappiness and potential harm rather than invite change into their lives. Perhaps the problematic behavior was learned in their family of origin, or perhaps it is a coping strategy that was developed as a result of a life event. In this sense, the problematic behavior, or symptom, serves to maintain system homeostasis. Oftentimes, it is only when life becomes too uncomfortable that persons consider change.

Papp (1983) discusses the idea of change relative to a systems perspective, suggesting the therapist use the following five questions while formulating a hypothesis.

Table 2:4 Change from a Systems Perspective	
1	What function does the symptom serve in stabilizing the family?
2	How does the family function in stabilizing the symptom?

3	What is the central theme around which the problem is organized?
4	What will be the consequences of change?
5	What is the therapeutic dilemma?
Table 2:4	

Source: Papp, P. (1983). *The Process of Change*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

In addition to thinking about these questions, Papp (1983) also considers the timing of the problematic issue in terms of why the client is in counseling at this particular point in time, as well as what the precipitating factors might include in terms of events and/or behaviors. Realizing the relational connection between system and symptom, Papp (1983) recommends the therapist think about what the change, or expected change, is and the subsequent and consequential threat it brings to the system's homeostasis and the resultant anxiety felt and expressed through symptomatic behaviors.

Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) identify five stages of change: (1) precontemplation, (2) contemplation, (3) preparation, (4) action, and (5) maintenance. For each of these stages, the therapist has an active role in the therapeutic process, in terms of promoting and supporting client change.

A client at the precontemplation stage does not readily acknowledge a problem, and may be present in therapy as a result of another's suggestion, such as a parent, spouse, friend, or employer. Consequently, the client is not thinking about changing behavior. The therapist's work entails helping the client move to the contemplation stage. This involves gently talking with the client about the concern, listening to the client's point of view, and encouraging the client to consider, explore, and appreciate the potential favorable outcome should behavior change occur. Additionally, the therapist can assist in highlighting the possible consequences of the client's current behavior, both positive and negative. At the contemplation stage, the client is aware of and acknowledges that a problem exists, is willing to discuss it, and may even consider

change while not committing to it. Unsure if change is worthwhile in terms of time, effort, and energy, combined with ambivalence about action, the client is more open to discussion of the problem than a discussion about behavior change. While not yet intent on personal change, the client would prefer the other person in the equation to change. The therapist's work at this stage is to encourage the client to think about change and, while offering ideas and possibilities, provide supportive opportunities for the client to consider changing behavior. At the preparation stage, the client has awareness of and acknowledges the problem, and is now ready to effect some type of behavior change. Therapist tasks at this stage include eliciting and exploring possible and realistic solutions, exploring and considering potential barriers, and formulating coping strategies. When the action stage is reached, the client, having made a firm commitment toward change, is looking to the therapist for specific strategies to move forward. In this stage, the therapist's tasks include helping the client increase self-efficacy, monitoring progress with the client, continuing to offer suggestions, and helping the client maintain momentum. The maintenance stage is when the client has made the desired behavior change and needs assistance maintaining it. Therapist tasks include celebrating success with the client, and finding appropriate solutions for any anticipated challenges and/or any negative feedback loops.

There are many persons who agree that spiritual and emotional health are of paramount importance individually and relationally, but may not know where or how to start the process. Scazzero (2003) asserts that "emotional health and spiritual health are inseparable ... it is not possible for a Christian to be spiritually mature while remaining

emotionally immature” (p. 50). Accordingly, he has developed a diagnostic tool designed to measure one’s emotional and spiritual health introspectively and relationally.

Table 2:5 Emotional/Spiritual Health Inventory					
Please answer these questions as honestly as possibly.					
		Not very true	Sometimes true	Mostly true	Very true
PART A: General Formation and Discipleship					
1	I feel confident of my adoption as God’s son/daughter and rarely, if ever, question his acceptance of me.	1	2	3	4
2	I love to worship God by myself as well as with others.	1	2	3	4
3	I spend quality, regular time in the Word of God and in prayer.	1	2	3	4
4	I sense the unique ways God has gifted me individually and am actively using my spiritual gifts for his service.	1	2	3	4
5	I am a vital participant in a community with other believers.	1	2	3	4
6	It is clear that my money, gifts, time, and abilities are completely at God’s disposal and not my own.	1	2	3	4
7	I consistently integrate my faith in the marketplace and the world.	1	2	3	4
Total					
PART B: Emotional Components of Discipleship					
<i>Principle 1: Look Beneath the Surface</i>					
1	It’s easy for me to identify what I am feeling inside (John 11:33–35; Luke 19:41–44).	1	2	3	4
2	I am willing to explore previously unknown or unacceptable parts of myself, allowing Christ to more fully transform me (Rom. 7:21–25; Col. 3:5–17).	1	2	3	4
3	I enjoy being alone in quiet reflection with God and myself (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12).	1	2	3	4
4	I can share freely about my emotions, sexuality, joy, and pain (Ps. 22; Prov. 5:18–19; Luke 10:21).	1	2	3	4
5	I am able to experience and deal with anger in a way that leads to growth in others and myself (Eph. 4:25–32).	1	2	3	4
6	I am honest with myself (and a few significant others) about the feelings, beliefs, doubts, pains, and hurts beneath the surface of my life (Ps. 73; 88; Jer. 20:7–18).	1	2	3	4
Total					
<i>Principle 2: Break the Power of the Past</i>					
7	I resolve conflict in a clear, direct, and respectful way, not what I might have learned growing up in my family, such as painful putdowns, avoidance, escalating tensions, or going to a third party rather than to the person directly (Matt. 18:15–18).	1	2	3	4
8	I am intentional at working through the impact of significant “earthquake” events that shaped my present, such as the death of a family member, an unexpected pregnancy, divorce, addiction, or major financial disaster (Gen. 50:20; Ps. 51).	1	2	3	4
9	I am able to thank God for <i>all</i> my past life experiences, seeing how he has used them to uniquely shape me into who I am (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28–30).	1	2	3	4
10	I can see how certain “generational sins” have been passed down to me through my family history, including character flaws, lies, secrets, ways of coping with pain, and unhealthy tendencies in relating to others (Ex. 20:5; compare Gen. 20:2; 26:7; 27:19; 37:1–33).	1	2	3	4
11	I don’t need approval from others to feel good about myself (Prov. 29:25; Gal. 1:10).	1	2	3	4

12	I take responsibility and ownership for my past life rather than to blame others (John 5:5–7).	1	2	3	4
TOTAL					
<i>Principle 3: Live in Brokenness and Vulnerability</i>					
13	I often admit when I'm wrong, readily asking forgiveness from others (Matt. 5:23–24).	1	2	3	4
14	I am able to speak freely about my weaknesses, failures, and mistakes (2 Cor. 12:7–12).	1	2	3	4
15	Others would easily describe me as approachable, gentle, open, and transparent (Gal. 5:22–23; 1 Cor. 13:1–6).	1	2	3	4
16	Those close to me would say that I am not easily offended or hurt (Matt. 5:39–42, 1 Cor. 13:5).	1	2	3	4
17	I am consistently open to hearing and applying constructive criticism and feedback that others might have for me (Prov. 10:17; 17:10; 25:12).	1	2	3	4
18	I am rarely judgmental or critical of others (Matt. 7:1–5).	1	2	3	4
19	Others would say that I am slow to speak, quick to listen, and good at seeing things from their perspective (James 1:19–20).	1	2	3	4
TOTAL					
<i>Principle 4: Receive the Gift of Limits</i>					
20	I've never been accused of "trying to do it all" or of biting off more than I could chew (Matt. 4:1–11).	1	2	3	4
21	I am regularly able to say "no" to requests and opportunities than risk overextending myself (Mark 6:30–32).	1	2	3	4
22	I recognize the different situations where my unique, God-given personality can be either a help or hindrance in responding appropriately (Ps. 139; Rom. 12:3; 1 Peter 4:10).	1	2	3	4
23	It's easy for me to distinguish the difference between when to help carry someone else's burden (Gal 6:2) and when to let it go so they can carry their own burden (Gal. 6:5).	1	2	3	4
24	I have a good sense of my emotional, relational, physical, and spiritual capacities, intentionally pulling back to rest and fill my "gas tank" again (Mark 1:21–39).	1	2	3	4
25	Those close to me would say that I am good at balancing family, rest, work, and play in a biblical way (Ex. 20:8).	1	2	3	4
TOTAL					
<i>Principle 5: Embrace Grieving and Loss</i>					
26	I openly admit my losses and disappointments (Ps. 3:1–8; 5:1–12).	1	2	3	4
27	When I go through a disappointment or a loss, I reflect on how I'm feeling rather than pretend that nothing is wrong (2 Sam. 1:4, 17–27; Ps. 51:1–17).	1	2	3	4
28	I take time to grieve my losses as David (Ps. 69) and Jesus did (Matt. 26:39; John 11:35; 12:27).	1	2	3	4
29	People who are in great pain and sorrow tend to seek me out because it's clear to them that I am in touch with the losses and sorrows in my own life (2 Cor 1:3–7).	1	2	3	4
30	I am able to cry and experience depression or sadness, explore the reasons behind it, and allow God to work in me through it (Ps. 42; Matt. 26:36–46).	1	2	3	4
TOTAL					
<i>Principle 6: Make Incarnation Your Model for Loving Well</i>					
31	I am regularly able to enter into other people's world and feelings, connecting deeply with them and taking time to imagine what it feels like to live in their shoes (John 1:1–14; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:3–5).	1	2	3	4
32	People close to me would describe me as a responsive listener (Prov. 29:11; James 1:19).	1	2	3	4
33	I have a healthy sense of who I am, where I've come from, and what are my values, likes, passions, dislikes, and so on (John 13:3).	1	2	3	4

34	I am able to accept myself just the way I am (John 13:1–3; Rom. 12:3).	1	2	3	4
35	I am able to form deep relationships with people from different backgrounds, cultures, races, educational, and economic classes (John 4:1–26; Acts 10–11).	1	2	3	4
36	People close to me would say that I suffer with those who suffer and rejoice with those who rejoice (Rom. 12:15).	1	2	3	4
37	I am good about inviting people to adjust and correct my previous assumptions about them (Prov. 20:5; Col. 3:12–14).	1	2	3	4
38	When I confront someone who has hurt or wronged me, I speak more in the first person (“I” and “me”) about how I am feeling rather than speak in blaming tones (“you” or “they”) about what was done (Prov. 25:11; Eph. 4:29–32).	1	2	3	4
39	I rarely judge others quickly but instead am a peacemaker and reconciler (Matt. 7:1–5).	1	2	3	4
40	People would describe me as someone who makes “loving well” my number-one aim (John 13:34–35; I Cor. 13).	1	2	3	4
TOTAL					

Source: Scazzero, P. 2003. *The Emotionally Healthy Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

This inventory is particularly useful for those who correspondingly concur with Scazzero’s integrative view, and desire to get a sense of one’s personal and relational discipleship components. For instructions on how to score and interpret results and findings, please refer to pages 64 to 66 of the text.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Integration

For the purposes of this paper, integration is defined as “the state of combination or the process of combining into completeness and harmony” (Dictionary.com, 2008)

Integration may refer to incorporating concepts, techniques, and methods from different therapeutic models into an integrated model, and it may also refer to interdisciplinary integration, for example theology and psychology.

The process of integration within the therapeutic domain is methodological, not merely eclecticism, and is built on two or more therapeutic models. Integrative methods include (1) merging concepts from one model with the processes of another, (2) blending concepts and methods thereby creating a synthesis of two therapies, (3) combining concepts and techniques from various models and connecting them with common assumptions, or (4) juxtaposing therapeutic models consecutively (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

The purpose of integration is to help clients in an appropriate and effective manner to effect change where needed. It may be in the emotional, behavioral, cognitive, or spiritual realm, or a combination thereof, and in intrapsychic and/or interpersonal domains.

Writings on the interdisciplinary integration of psychology and theology date back to the 1940's when physician Paul Tournier began writing about integrating faith and counseling in his medical practice. Subsequent literature included Paul Meehl in 1958, Clyde Narramore in 1960, Paul Tournier in 1964, Richard Bube in 1971, Gary

Collins in 1973 and 1977, John Carter and Richard Mohline in 1976, John Carter and Bruce Narramore in 1979, Larry Crabb in 1977, and Kirk Farnsworth in 1982. After a period of relative silence on the topic of integration, a renewed interest emerged through authors such as Clinton, Bouma-Predigner, and Foster & Bolsinger in 1990, Narramore in 1992, Heard in 1993, Worthington in 1994, Eck in 1996, Ellens in 1997, and Faw in 1998 (Johnson & Jones, 2000). Some of these will be considered below.

Carter and Narramore (1979) published a work that highlights the intrinsic problems resulting from integrating psychology and theology. Based on the idea that all truth has its origin in God, the hope and intent of this work was to spark further study in the integration of these two disciplines. Johnson and Jones (2000) agree that truth is fundamental to an integrative perspective, and present four major views relative to psychology and Christianity. In the quest for truth, these four views include (1) observation and experimentation, (2) integrator as Spirit-led in thought and action, (3) Christian psychology as fundamental to the Christian faith, and (4) a strictly biblical counseling view. Smith (1990) presents an integrative approach to counseling that consists of a reframed scientific model which acknowledges God as the source of all truth, and asserts that, because humankind are created in the image of God, they are capable of ascertaining truth.

Jones and Butman (1991) suggest an evaluative process wherein one gleans from secular sources in an effort to integrate useful insights, which is subsequently followed by theory development and incorporation.

Johnson (n.d.) compares five models relative to psychology from Christian perspective. First is the levels of explanation with proponents David Myers and Malcolm

Jeeves, which embraces both science and research. The second is the integration model represented by Bruce Narramore, Mark McMinn, Stan Jones, and Everett Worthington, which is based on the premise that all truth is God's truth. Thirdly, the modern pastoral care model, supported by Anton Boisen, Howard Clinebell, and Don Browning, integrates modern and postmodern psychology with liberal theology. Fourth, the biblical counseling model, proposed by Jay Adams, Wayne Mack, David Powlison, and Ed Welch, relies on the sole sufficiency of scripture for traditional biblical counseling. Lastly, the Christian psychology model with classical representatives like the apostle Paul, Augustine, Julian of Norwich, John Bunyan, and Soren Kierkegaard, and contemporary proponents like Robert Roberts, Larry Crabb, Diane Langberg, Paul Vitz, and Paul J. Watson. This model is influenced by scripture and ecclesial tradition, informed by psychological truth, research, practice, and incorporates human experience and science. (www.aacc.net/email/media/scp_1.ppt)

McMinn (1996) contends that an integration of psychology and theology can also include spirituality, meaning that the Christian counselor cannot help but reflect a Christian belief system thereby affecting how an integrationist conducts therapy. Walker et al (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of 26 studies including almost 6,000 therapists in regard to the integration of spirituality and counseling. Findings indicate that religious clients will find counseling more profitable and beneficial with categorically religious counselors, those who have an interest in and regularly participate in religious and spiritual practices.

Scazzaro (2003) integrates in a unique way wherein he maintains that one cannot be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature, therefore spiritual and emotional maturity are required for wholeness.

O'Reilly-Knapp and Erskine (2003) combine several theoretical models to form an integrative transactional analysis model in an effort to assist clients in comprehending the relational aspects between intrapsychic process and defense mechanisms. Erskine et al. (1997) developed a model integrating the cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological dimensions wherein the therapeutic relationship plays a key role in resolving contact deficits resulting in overall healthier relationships for the client.

Several integrative models in particular have met with success. These include integrative family therapy for child custody and visitation disputes (Lebow, 2003), an integration of individual and family therapies involving a structural-developmental modality (Melito, 2006), and an integrative model of behavioral couple therapy (Cano & Leonard, 2006). In a follow-up study conducted by Christensen et al (2006), where 130 couples responded, couples who received integrative behavioral couple therapy reported quicker gains in marital satisfaction, generally progressed, interacted, and communicated better, and evidenced greater marital stability than those couples who received traditional behavioral couple therapy.

Beck (2006) discusses the history of psychological and Christian integration over the past fifty years and speculates on what this integration will look like fifty years from the present time. He estimates that some remaining aspects will be emphasized, some will no longer be applicable, and some new additions and innovations will emerge in the integrative arena. Additionally, he speculates that integration will be synthesized,

psychologists and theologians will value collaboration, and therapists will broaden the scope of counseling to include spiritual formation and will desire, embrace, and include new psychological studies for integration.

Family Systems Theory

Family therapy was born in the 1950's, attempted to gain credibility in the 1960's, produced a plethora of modalities in the 1970's and 1980's, and began to experience collaboration rather than competitiveness in the 1990's (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Families are comprised of members who are in relation to one another. When the family is viewed through a systems theory lens, problems are viewed contextually within the family system (Corsini & Wedding, 2000). Carter and McGoldrick (1988) note that problematic behaviors usually occur when there is an anticipated change within the system, for example, a change in developmental stages. The purpose of the problematic behavior, or the symptom, is to maintain homeostasis to prevent the system from changing. An organizational change in the family system will cause further corresponding changes within individuals and relationships in the entire family system (Cox & Paley, 2003, Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

While acknowledging limitations and the need for further research, Shumway et al, (2007) contend that family systems theory has transferable qualities useful for intervening in organizations as well as families. Friedman (1985) and Adams (2004) extend the family systems concept not only to the families within the congregation, but also to the congregation as a whole, a family of families. Friedman (1985) discusses triangles, homeostasis, and relationship emotional processes within the church system between leader and congregation. Adams (2004) suggests the role of the therapist may be

to help the family invite Christ into their family system allowing their particular family story to become part of a larger story, namely, God's story. Further, Adams (2004) suggests that illumination from the Holy Spirit is active and available to those who desire transformation with regard to intergenerational sin.

Buker (2003) provides a unique view on epistemological change, spiritual development, and systems theory. Therapeutically, he proposes three levels of change, the first being a behavior change within a system while continuing to maintain control of the system. This type of change may or may not last. The second level of change occurs when there is genuine cognitive and behavioral change, effectively changing one's relationship with the system. The third level of change is marked by surrender to the system, wherein the focus finally shifts from self to the larger system. Buker (2003) develops this concept further in terms of change and Christian spirituality. In the first level, the individual recognizes sin as a problem, makes a decision to avoid it, and proceeds to believe that sin has been conquered. However, the person at this level who thinks of oneself as no longer a sinner fails to recognize the self as powerless to earn righteousness. The second level of change takes place when the individual realizes the powerlessness or weakness as strength in terms of grace through faith, allowing genuine cognitive and behavior change. The third level of change occurs only with complete surrender to God, when one's focus shifts from oneself to God.

Cox and Paley (2003) assert that family systems theory is shifting from the parent-child dynamic to a broader view including influences within sub-systems and extended family members, and further assert that a perspective on the whole family is necessary to comprehend factors such as children's development and emotional security.

Lund et al (2002) suggest that while many family therapists are reluctant to include young children in the therapy session, it is remarkably constructive and fruitful to do so. It has proven helpful in terms of redefining problems from an individual, in this case the child, to a system's perspective. As well, observing family dynamics and benefiting from children's natural spontaneity and honesty are advantageous and of value. Research indicates that family therapy can provide unexpected benefits wherein it allows parents to attend and participate in therapy they otherwise would not have, had they not sought therapy for their child (Law et al, 2003). Wark et al (2001) propose that the Internal Family Systems, a combination of intrapsychic and systems approaches, is effective for treatment of children's problematic emotional issues. However, it appears that the problem behavior is perceived as the child's rather than as a system problem.

Pinkus (2006) supports the use of family systems theory in terms of its usefulness for both professionals and parents when interacting with special need children, specifically in the area of implementing and maintaining healthy boundaries. Additionally, Campbell (2003) asserts that family systems therapy is a valuable tool, combined with education, support, and psychoeducation, that has proven effective in helping families cope with physical disorders including pediatric and adult chronic illnesses and disease prevention.

Employing systems theory in place of behavior therapy can reframe not only the client as the identified patient but can also reframe the problem. For example, Williams (1982) redefines a previously labeled fear of flying issue in behavior terms to a pressure from the individual's family to feel comfortable flying issue in family systems therapy.

There are those who realize the need for continued studies insofar as how and where family systems theory will be effective as a replacement for an existing individual therapy or as an adjunct to another modality. While advocating for further research to include empirical validation, Phillips (2006), based on clinical experience reports, contends that family systems therapy is a valuable tool in treating individuals with sexual addiction by including their families in therapy sessions, using age appropriate disclosure. Collin (2006) suggests that a systems approach to applied career theory, complete with sub-systems, feedback, homeostasis, entropy, and equifinality, has the potential to be constructive and productive in terms of theory, research, and practice.

Nichols and Schwartz (1998) note that in the early days of family systems therapy, individuals tended to be ignored for the sake of the system, similar to the way that family systems was ignored by individual therapists. According to Minnich-Sadler (2005), because family systems theory tends to disregard the individual human understanding of life for the sake of the system and may consequently render certain behaviors dysfunctional, she asserts that combining it with a human development theory provides a more helpful perspective consequently lessening the occurrence of misdiagnosis. Cook (1994), utilizing the Social Relations Model, considers several problematical areas of family systems research, including ambiguity around arbitrariness and personal experience of family members. Family systems theory has received criticism relative to issues of violence and victimization and its ineffective application in multi-cultural settings (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Additional criticism includes problems with communication, power imbalances, and loyalties in larger contextual settings resulting in splits and unhelpful alliances. Furthermore, family therapists, in an

attempt to gain credibility, have received criticism for a perceived intentional isolation from other health professionals (Hair et al, 1996), and have even been accused of purporting messianic tendencies (Johnson, 2001).

Family systems therapy has experienced its own evolutionary adaptations, modifications, and revisions. The shift from modernism to postmodernism in the 1980's and 1990's challenged biases and belief systems relative to science, religion, and politics resulting in skepticism about objective truth (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998), thereby resulting in other perspectives regarding how the family is viewed, the role of the therapist, and the targeted object of change.

Bowen Family Systems Theory

Bowen is highly regarded in the family therapy field as one of the essential pioneers worthy of study. A number of Bowen's concepts have become generalized throughout the family therapy field (Papero, 1990).

While many studies have been undertaken to acknowledge, affirm, and support Bowen's theories, (Charles, 2001, Gibson & Donigian, 1993, Hertlein & Killmer, 2004, Jenkins et al., 2005, Johnson & Buboltz, 2000, 2002, Klever 2003, 2004, 2005, Murdock & Gore, 2004, Murray et al., 2006, and Peleg-Popko, 2002), there is also evaluative criticism. This includes deficiencies in conducting family therapy with individual clients and not always including the nuclear family, and basing his theory on clinical observation rather than empirical research (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Throughout the 1990's there were numerous studies testing the theoretical validity of a number of Bowen's assumptions, some were validated while others were not supported. The unsupported assumptions included the idea that persons with similar differentiation levels attract and

marry, theories on sibling position, triangulation, and multigenerational transmission, and the consequences of differentiation on child functioning, adaptableness, and physical health issues (Miller et al., 2004). Additionally, Bowen Family Systems Theory has received criticism for gender bias, over-focusing on the mother's contribution to symptom development in children thereby fostering disrespect for both the male and female parent, and while it does describe emotional processes, it does not readily allow for emotional expression (Brown, 1999, Horne & Hicks, 2002).

Theological Anthropology (Personhood, Imago Dei, Sin)

McFarlane (2006) provides a Christian definition of personhood relative to the creation narrative, faith in Jesus Christ, redemption, relationship, and the Kingdom of God. According to Anderson (1982), a theological anthropology includes discussions on humanity as creatureliness, determined by the Word of God, determined by the other, and as self-determined, who are created in the image of God as male and female. Wilks (2005) describes three aspects of personhood, which are persons as individuals, persons in relationship as part of community, and persons in covenant relationship with God. Cameron (2005) asserts a theological anthropology includes the creation story, sin and salvation, divine calling and human response, personal transformation including the mind, emotions, and will, as well as a social transformation. Sherrifs (2005) would add illustrations from the proverbs and psalms to have personhood include a psychobiological dynamic, and an inner being and spirituality. Turner (2005) provides thoughts on how Jesus informs the concept of personhood for Christians.

Hoekema (1986) provides a discourse on the structural and functional aspects of the imago dei. To be created in God's image means that persons are created for

relationship with God, one another, and nature (Hoekema, 1986). Smail (2003) presents an interesting concept proposing humankind as created in the image of the triune God, suggesting specific ways persons are created in the image of the Father, in the image of the Son, and in the image of the Holy Spirit.

Hoekema (1986) discusses the origin, spread, nature, and restraint of sin. Bloesch (2006) describes the meaning of sin as rebellion, the manifestations and consequences of sin as pride and sensuality.

Marriage, Sexuality, Family

According to Torrance (nd) and Prince (2006), marriage (1) is part of God's creative act wherein He joins the man and woman to a one flesh union, (2) is in the framework of the atonement and reconciliatory work of God through Jesus Christ meaning that Christian marriage is restorative and redemptive, and (3) is symbolic of Christ and the Church.

While some authors view marriage as strictly covenantal, there are those who view it also as contractual (Witte & Ellison, 2005). Hugenberger (1994, 2004) views marriage as a covenant and bases it on the following five points. He asserts that (1) the Malachi 2:14 reference to covenant marriage is literal in its meaning, (2) marriage was intended to be monogamous, (3) the idea of marriage as covenant is confirmed by other scriptural references as found in Proverbs 2:17, Ezekiel 16, Hosea 2:18-22, and 1 Samuel 18-20, (4) the sexual union within marriage denotes covenantal partnership, and (5) both the husband and wife are called to marital fidelity. Wall and Miller-McLemore (2002) and Witte and Ellison (2005) also view marriage from a covenantal perspective, in partnership with each other and expand the concept to include a wider social context.

Other proponents of the covenantal view offer biblical principles as the basis for and sustenance of marriage, including communication, intimacy, and spiritual union (Chapman, 2003; Prince, 2006).

A theology of authentic sexuality is comprised of covenantal love, resulting in commitment, grace, affirmation, and intimacy, meaning knowing the other and being known by the other (Balswick & Balswick, 1999). Sexuality reflects God's creativity, is primarily about relationship and disclosure of the self to another (Fuchs, 1983), and was God's intent from the beginning when He created male and female and deemed it good (Sonnenberg, 1998). Sexual differentness, created by God, is experienced in complementarity not contradiction, and denotes completion (Anderson, 1982).

In addition to viewing marriage as covenant, family is also viewed as covenantal (Anderson & Guernsey, 1985, Balswick & Balswick, 1999, Guernsey, 1984). Anderson and Guernsey (1985) and Guernsey (1984) make the distinction between contract and covenant, stressing that covenant is self-sustainable and denotes grace in terms of unconditional love, acceptance, and commitment. This covenantal love in action ultimately allows families to reach out to others outside the familial boundaries (Balswick & Balswick, 1999).

Wright (2002) asserts that, according to the bible, marriage is foundational to family life and family was the primary setting for teaching the history, laws, faith, and traditions of Israel. He also asserts that today as in the past, according to the book of Proverbs, familial relationships are supremely significant for persons who desire wisdom and happiness. He cites instances and principles from Jesus' life that affirmed family, which include his affirmation of marriage evidenced at the wedding in Cana, his citing of

the fifth commandment, and the many recorded miracles of healing as a response to pleas from hurting family members.

Theory of Change

Systemic change occurs through first and second order changes and takes place through feedback loops and changes in family roles and/or rules, which cause the system to evolve and adapt (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Change is not viewed in terms of singular solutions to singular problems, but rather as an interaction or pattern of a belief system in need of resolution (Papp, 1983).

According to Bowen, personal and systemic change occurs with changes in differentiation levels, potentially affecting all of the individual's relationships (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998). Additional family therapy models suggest change transpires through other means and avenues. These include ideas such as (1) the family narrative needs to change, (2) change comes through emotional experience, (3) change is accompanied only by insight and understanding and the subsequent processing of same, (4) change occurs through gaining new interactional patterns which in turn will effect change in the family structure, and some maintain that (5) change occurs through cognitive restructuring and reinforcement of behavior change (Nichols & Schwartz, 1998).

Chapter 4

Case Study

Identifying Information

In this case study, all the names have been changed to protect confidentiality. Keith and Sandra Brown, 35 and 40 years of age respectively, have been married for twelve years and have three children, Cathy, 15, Lisa, 11, and Alec, 7 years old. While Keith is not Cathy's biological father, he has legally adopted her. Neither Cathy nor Sandra has any contact with Cathy's biological father, Jack.

Keith earned a college diploma in Electrical Techniques and was employed for many years as an assembly line shift worker in an automobile parts manufacturing plant. A recent massive lay off has afforded him the opportunity to open a home improvement business. While only two months into this new venture, he is fairly busy due to word of mouth referrals. Sandra graduated from college with a diploma in Early Childhood Education and currently works in a Real Estate office as an administrative assistant. Because of her connections in the real estate field, she is able to refer job opportunities to her husband Keith. Currently, she provides bookkeeping services for Keith's home improvement business.

Relevant History

Family History - Keith

Keith, the oldest of four brothers, was born into a Christian home in 1972 to Bert and Joan Brown. Keith describes his father Bert as quiet, kind, loving, and devoted, as well as relational, hospitable, and a practical hands-on type of man. He has always been and continues to be a good role model for his sons. Joan tends to be dependable,

controlling, and narcissistic in nature. She was reared in a Christian home where her father worked as a skilled laborer, and her mother, a homemaker, was the disciplinarian and tended to have a controlling personality. Bert is much like his father, who was a quiet man, while his mother, the strong disciplinarian, was a determined and hospitable individual.

Overall, during his childhood and adolescent years, Keith describes his parents as loving, supportive, easy to talk to, and affectionate to their children as well as one another. Additionally, his parents encouraged the children in their activities, relationships, and career choices through counsel rather than instruction, by teaching and equipping them to make informed decisions. Since the sons have grown, moved out on their own, and married, Joan clearly favors her son Brad, which creates distance between her and Keith.

Fond childhood memories consist of family activities and events such as the many camping trips taken together. Some of the significant events in Keith's childhood are the death of his maternal grandfather when he was 9 years old, his salvation experience also at 9 years of age, and his baptism at 11 years old. In young adulthood, at the age of 19 he graduated from high school, and bought his first car and graduated from college at 20 years old.

Keith's brothers, Al, Brad, and Jim, are Christian men, married with families. Keith is described by Sandra as practical, loving, caring, and affectionate with a great sense of humor. He operates, in the scriptural sense, as head of the house and as disciplinarian. Al, who is 34 years old is married to Anne, and has three children, Josh, 12, Tiffany, 9, and Ashley, 7 years old. As a teacher, he is intelligent and opinionated,

devoting most of his energy to his career. In Keith's opinion, Al does not communicate well in his marriage and does not participate in disciplining the children. Brad, aged 32 is married to Audrey, who is Anne's sister, and has a 1-year-old daughter named Brittany. Brad, whom Keith describes as self-absorbed, competitive, and materialistic, works as a press operator. Consistent with his characteristics, he only contacts his siblings when it is beneficial for him. The youngest brother Jim, who is 30 years old, is married to Shelley, with a 2-year-old daughter named Angie. Jim is a part-time teacher and drill operator, whom Keith describes as a family man who is very social, sensitive, and compassionate. Typically, because of his dislike of conflict, he often takes on the role of peacekeeper in an effort to thwart arguments and disagreements in the family system.

For the most part, the three generations described in this family system include strong women who naturally operate in a disciplinarian role, and loving, caring, and kind men who function in a provider role. These relationships suggest somewhat of a balance in terms of environmental and emotional support.

Family History - Sandra

Sandra, the older of two siblings, was born in 1967 to Lionel and Beth Donaldson. Both of her parents were raised in homes characterized by poor communication in the parental sub system. Lionel's father was a hard-working man, and his mother, a homemaker, was a loving and authoritative parent. Little is known concerning Beth's father other than his employment history in coal mining. Her mother was a positive, nurturing, and self-sufficient woman with a great sense of humor.

Sandra's parents terminated their common-law relationship when she was 15 years old, after which time she lived with her father. She describes her father as a

stubborn yet fun-loving man with a sense of humor. Sandra describes Beth as a secretive, obsessive, and stubborn individual, living in her own world.

During her childhood Sandra describes her parents as strict but not abusive. Because their philosophy was “their way or the highway”, Sandra learned not to question them or assert herself as she quickly realized that compliance rather than defiance created a more peaceful home environment. She notes that her parents loved her in their own way through provision of life’s essential necessities, including food, clothing, and housing. Concerning fond childhood memories, she remarks that her best include friends and teachers rather than family members.

Some of the significant events in Sandra’s childhood include completing three years of Judo, the death of her paternal grandmother, and her parent’s separation when she was 15 years old. In young adulthood she graduated from high school at 19 years of age and from college at age 21. Soon after college graduation, she met Jack, an alcoholic, with whom she began a relationship wherein emotional stability and financial security were lacking. After living in a common law relationship with him for four years, Sandra gave birth to their daughter, Cathy. Shortly after Cathy’s one year birthday, Sandra decided to leave the relationship and moved to her father’s home with Cathy. She immediately secured full-time employment, and one year later, after establishing herself in her job, she was able to acquire an apartment for herself and Cathy.

Both Keith and Sandra agree that she is a determined and opinionated, yet adaptable when necessary, individual, who thrives in social and relational settings. Her younger brother Tom is a musician, whom she describes as stubborn and strong-willed, with creative abilities. Currently, Tom and Sandra maintain a close relationship.

In the generations of this family system, themes include family secrets, divorce, and emotional cutoffs. Traits consist of poor communication, argumentative tendencies, insecurity, and a need for acceptance.

Family History – Couple

Keith introduced himself to Sandra at their place of employment in the autumn of 1994, when they quickly forged a close friendship. In February 1995, he invited her to attend church with him; she accepted and began attending regularly, which eventually led to a salvation experience in May. At that point, their friendship turned romantic, they became engaged and were married on July 1, 1995. They each describe their wedding day as “one of the best days of my life”. Their daughter Lisa was born on March 16, 1996 and their son Alec was born on November 16, 1999. When Alec was 2 months old, he contracted Pertusis and Respiratory Syncytial Virus, which caused two life threatening medical emergencies during his 13-day hospital stay, prior to stabilizing. After almost losing their son, they re-prioritized much in their lives, and as a result, their faith in God increased and became stronger, and their relationship experienced increased intimacy.

Couple Dynamics

Because their family systems are so vastly different in terms of Christian versus non-Christian, openness versus secretiveness, marriage versus common-law relationships, and enduring marriage versus separation and divorce, it is not surprising that two completely different sets of rules have emerged and caused conflict in Keith and Sandra’s relationship.

In terms of spirituality, both Keith and Sandra are committed Christians. While they may be at different spiritual stages, both are determined to grow in Christ, and use

their giftedness to minister to others. Although Sandra has a strong personality, they have agreed on a satisfactory dynamic regarding their understanding of biblically based roles for husbands and wives, wherein decision-making, after a fair verbal exchange, is deemed primarily Keith's role.

According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial development, they are in the middle adult stage known as generativity versus stagnation. They are in the process of establishing, nurturing, and guiding the next generation with a commitment to and concern for family, church, and community. They are parenting, nurturing close relationships, and managing careers and their household.

Couple Personality Dynamics

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) classifies Keith as ISTJ (Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging), and Sandra as ESFJ (Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling, Judging). As an introvert, Keith is comfortable being alone, tends to focus on his inner world in terms of reflecting and re-energizing, while Sandra as an extrovert is more outgoing as a people person, and is re-energized through interaction with others.

Sensing indicates that both Keith and Sandra prefer to focus on the basic information they accommodate and assimilate through their five senses rather than hunches, and they tend to be concerned with what is actual, present, current, and real rather than thinking about theories, the future, and possibilities. Thinking denotes that Keith has a preference for logic and consistency when making decisions, while Sandra, with the feeling preference, tends to make decisions by taking people, their viewpoints and values into consideration. The judging preference suggests that they prefer a structured, planned, and orderly approach to life's events and activities.

The Keirsey Temperament Sorter confirms the MBTI personality types, sub-categorizing Keith as an Inspector Guardian and Sandra as a Provider Guardian. Again, in this instrument Keith is described as dependable, thorough, and orderly, and Sandra as sociable with an outgoing personality, and sensitive to other's feelings.

The Personality Mosaic describes Keith as Conventional and Realistic, meaning he tends to be practical, conservative, and orderly, requires logic, and prefers to actively solve problems by employing the rules. Sandra is described as Social and Conventional, meaning she tends to want to help people, and as a concerned leader she is sensitive, supportive, and responsive, and enjoys order, certainty, and security, and also likes to solve problems by following rules but includes feelings in the process.

In terms of individual personal strengths, Keith's include administration, dependability, and the ability to assume responsibility. Sandra's include practicality, resourcefulness, and a sense of immediate needs. Values for Keith include family, orderliness, responsibility, stability, organization, tradition, accuracy, efficiency, fairness, co-operation, and dependability. Sandra's values include action, freedom of expression, play, variety, excitement, humor, artistic creativity, skillfulness, spontaneity, and completing tasks quickly. While there may be some overlap in strengths and values, there is enough variety to assist, balance, and complement each other.

Regarding personality, Keith and Sandra possess similarities as well as differences. The similarities serve to help them understand one another, and the differences bring balance and complementarity to the relationship.

Medical History

Medical conditions in Keith's family include cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. In Sandra's family, medical history includes heart disease, cancer, and Cystic Fibrosis. At this point in time, no one in the nuclear family suffers from any of the aforementioned medical conditions.

Spiritual History

As previously mentioned, Keith grew up in a Christian home, accepted Christ as Savior at 9 years of age, and was baptized at 11. He attended the same church for thirty-three years, a Baptist church where his parents attend, until two years ago. During his attendance at that church, his ministry included audio/sound administration for Sunday morning services and other events, in addition to youth work.

Sandra became a Christian and was baptized at age 27 in the same Baptist church mentioned above. During her eleven year attendance at that church, her service included ushering, leading women's ministries and organizing a retreat, leading Pioneer Clubs and Youth ministries, running the toddler department, as well as involvement in vacation bible school, choir, and drama.

Unfortunately, leadership issues arose and escalated to the point where Keith and Sandra felt it necessary to leave that church. As a consequence of leaving the church, they lost all their friendships with other couples who chose to remain there. This series of events left them feeling shocked, hurt, and angry initially, and later betrayed, deceived, and manipulated. For the past three years, they have attended elsewhere, a church where they believe God is bringing healing into their lives. They have become members of this church, and both are involved in leading junior high youth and a small group.

Additionally, Keith is using his giftedness in audio/sound administration, and Sandra is using her gifts in performing drama and organizing group events. As they feel accepted in their new church setting, they are connecting with others and endeavoring to build significant and meaningful relationships.

Current Mental Status

The family presented in a confident manner during the initial assessment. While they were dressed casually, it was obvious that their overall appearance, including hygiene and clothing, was well attended to and important to their presentation of themselves. Although Sandra is overweight, she is well aware of the ingredients needed for a healthy lifestyle in terms of nutrition and exercise. The parents do not drink excessively, do not take drugs, and are not currently on any type of prescription medication.

Keith and Sandra appeared very alert with a sense of self-confidence while articulating their current relationship status as well as their recollection of earlier memories. They were able to recall childhood, adolescent, and young adulthood memories with ease remembering names, places, situations, and sometimes emotions connected with particular events. Thought processes for Keith tended to be influenced by logic more than emotion, while for Sandra, there seemed to be more of a balance between logic and emotion. They spoke intelligently, completing thoughts and expressing thoroughness. Overall, they appear to have average intelligence. Absolutely no suicidal or homicidal ideation was reported.

Cathy presented as a quiet yet engaged teenage girl who did not offer answers or comments unless asked directly. Lisa answered questions when asked directly and

offered additional comments throughout the interview process. Alec was the least attentive and most active member of the family. He answered questions and offered comments whenever he was able as he enjoys being the center of attention.

Psychological and Spiritual Formulation

Keith

Although Keith's family history seems to indicate females in the strong and controlling disciplinarian roles, with males in the quiet, loving, and caring roles, Keith seems to desire a healthy balance incorporating aspects from both roles without leaning too heavily either way. There is no doubt that he was and is influenced by the roles and rules evidenced in and by his family of origin. As a Christian, Keith feels a responsibility to exert headship in the home, and at the same time, he is married to a woman with a strong and influential character, somewhat like the women in his family of origin.

From a young age, Keith learned he could depend on his parents and grandparents to comfort and care for him. As they encouraged growth and independence at appropriate ages, he realized their presence and advice were always available for him. Their love and caring for Keith, combined with the positive male role models in his upbringing, resulted in Keith developing a safe and trustworthy view of God. He can comfortably trust that God wants the best for him and will care and provide for him and his family.

According to the Ephesians Four Ministries spiritual gift analysis, Keith's dominant spiritual gifts are exhortation and administration. As an exhorter, he is very practical, tolerant of others, serious-minded, orderly, and tends to make decisions logically. As an administrator, he is goal-oriented, well disciplined, and a take-charge

person who will step in taking the lead in the absence of leadership. His spiritual giftedness seems to correlate strongly with his personality type.

Differentiation.

Keith is comfortable with his behavior as an individual, father, and husband, and can behave differently and without influence from his family of origin. Additionally, he possesses the ability to maintain his own perspective and value system. However, he does not appear to have an emotional connection with his family of origin.

Relative to intrapsychic differentiation, while Keith is for the most part well-differentiated, there are a few areas indicative of less well-differentiated behaviors. During non stressful periods, his behavior almost always reflects a balanced integration between cognitive and emotional processes in both family and casual relationships, he is able to behave in a congruent manner relative to intellectual convictions and emotional sentiments, and possesses the ability to maintain his principles in an intimate relationship without feeling emotionally threatened. Additionally, in stressful situations he has the ability to maintain clarity regarding thoughts and feelings. The circumstances under which he tends to behave in a less well-differentiated manner are periods of prolonged stress, when his behavior is primarily emotionally directed rather than by a cognitive and emotional balance, and during a crisis, when he experiences conflict between thoughts and feelings sometimes to the point of immobilization.

Interpersonal differentiation is not problematical in casual relationships. However, in significant relationships, on occasion, he experiences difficulty identifying and asserting his own thoughts and expressing his own convictions in an effort to protect others' feelings.

Emotional Reactivity.

Essentially, Keith is not emotionally reactive. Therefore, he is not ruled by his emotions, is not overly sensitive to criticism, and is generally not concerned with making good impressions. He is not excessively concerned when others are upset with him and will not obsess all day over an argument with his spouse. While he is generally not sensitive to having hurt feelings, in significantly close relationships when he feels disappointed, he will withdraw for a time.

I Position.

Generally, Keith is self-accepting and true to self. He assigns more value to personal beliefs and convictions than to acceptance by others, and his self-esteem is not influenced and determined by another's opinion of him. He tends to remain reasonably calm under stress, and during an argument, he is usually able to separate thoughts about the issue from feelings for the person.

Emotional Cutoff.

Keith is able to express honest and true feelings to those he cares for, especially his nuclear family. He states that he is not afraid of intimacy and communicates a willingness to discuss problems in an effort to find resolution. However, he evidences some emotional cutoff from his parents in terms of not attributing importance to keeping in touch with them on a regular basis, and openly admits he does not live according to their expectations.

Fusion.

While generally able to attain intimacy in family relationships without fusion, there are times when fusion seems to occur in Keith's relationship with Sandra. When

they are apart for long periods of time, he states he feels that he is missing a part of himself.

Emotional/Spiritual Maturity.

The following table contains definitions of the emotional categories identified in Scazzaro's (2003) Emotional/Spiritual Health Inventory.

Table 4:1 Emotional/Spiritual Maturity Categories	
Emotional infant:	Like a physical infant, I look for other people to take care of me more than I care for them. I often have difficulty in describing and experiencing my feelings in healthy ways and rarely enter the emotional world of others. I am consistently driven by a need for instant gratification, often using others as objects to meet my needs, and I'm unaware of how my behavior is affecting/hurting them. People sometimes perceive me as inconsiderate, insensitive, and self-centered.
Emotional child:	Like a physical child, when life is going my way and I am receiving all the things I want and need, I am content and seem emotionally well-adjusted. However, as soon as disappointment, stress, tragedy, or anger enters the picture, I quickly unravel inside. I interpret disagreements as a personal offense and I'm easily hurt by others. When I don't get my way, I often drag my feet, become sarcastic, or take revenge. I have difficulty calmly discussing with others what I want and expect from them in a mature, loving way.
Emotional adolescent:	Like a physical adolescent, I know the right ways I should behave in order to "fit in" to mature, adult society. I can feel threatened and alarmed inside when I am offered constructive criticism, quickly becoming defensive, I subconsciously keep records of the love I give out so I can ask for something in return at a later time. When I am in conflict, I might admit some fault in the matter, but I will insist on demonstrating the guilt of the other party, proving why they are more to blame. Because of my commitment to self-survival, I have trouble really listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs without becoming preoccupied with myself.
Emotional adult:	I can respect and love others without having to change them or becoming critical and judgmental. I don't expect others to be perfect in meeting my relational needs, whether it be my spouse, parents, friends, boss, or pastor. I love and appreciate people for who they are as whole individuals, the good and the bad, and not for what they can give me or how they behave. I take responsibility for my own thoughts, feelings, goals, and actions. When under stress, I don't fall into a victim mentality or a blame game. I can state my own beliefs and values to those who disagree with me, without becoming adversarial. I am able to accurately assess my limits, strengths, and weaknesses and freely discuss them with others. Deeply in tune with my own emotions and feelings, I can move into the emotional worlds of others, meeting them at the place of their feelings, needs, and concerns. I am deeply convinced that I am absolutely loved by Christ, that I have nothing to prove.

Source: Scazzero, P. 2003. *The Emotionally Healthy Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

In the area of “general formation and discipleship” Keith is an emotional adult. This indicates that he not only has an awareness of his God-given giftedness but also utilizes it for God’s glory. He is confident of his relationship with God through Christ, enjoys worshipping God alone or with others, and regularly fellowships with other believers. Additionally, he is an emotional adult in the area of “living in brokenness and vulnerability”, indicating that he can admit when he is wrong, ask for forgiveness, and acknowledge and articulate his weaknesses and failures.

Keith is an emotional adolescent in the (1) breaking the power of the past, (2) receiving the gift of limits, (3) embracing grief and loss, and (4) making incarnation his model for loving well. This indicates that in these particular areas, (1) he experiences difficulty resolving conflict in a direct way and may default to less healthy family of origin tendencies, (2) he struggles with saying “no” to requests resulting in an overextension of self and difficulty with work/church/life balance, (3) he probably has not completely processed the losses experienced in his life, and (4) he has difficulty connecting with others on an emotional level.

In the “looking beneath the surface” area, Keith is an emotional child. This indicates that it is difficult for him to identify and share his emotions with others. Additionally, he is only sometimes willing to spend time in quiet reflection and explore feelings, doubts, and pain, allowing God to transform him.

Sandra

Sandra’s family history indicates poor communication patterns, including little if any conversation about feelings. Consequently, Sandra does not easily discuss her

feelings even to this day. She will open up after a degree of probing, which she interprets and receives as loving and caring behavior.

Sandra's most prevalent fear, which she traces back to childhood, is abandonment. As a child, she learned that home was not always a safe place to voice needs, thoughts, or feelings. As a result, she often remained quiet and became self-sufficient by developing a support system outside of the home involving a network of friends and teachers. Having rarely received affirmation from her parents, she received affirmation and encouragement through these non-familial relationships. Sandra still struggles with feelings of insecurity and has a strong need for acceptance and belonging. She satisfies this need by surrounding herself with reliable friends who can provide comfort and consistency in her life.

This fear of abandonment affects her spirituality in terms of trusting God. While she has a deep faith, she occasionally struggles with unanswered prayer and questions why God allows certain events to happen. It is of extreme importance for Sandra to feel loved and accepted by God and others, and as she continues to allow the Holy Spirit to work in and develop her, it is possible she will learn to trust God to love, support, comfort, and sustain her.

According to the Ephesians Four Ministries spiritual gift analysis, Sandra's dominant spiritual gifts include showing mercy and shepherding. As a mercy-shower, she is approachable, empathic, responsive, a good listener, and tends to make decisions based on feelings rather than fact. As a shepherd, she has the capacity and desire to serve God by overseeing, training, and caring for the needs of people.

Differentiation.

During non-stressful periods, she reports that she is usually well-differentiated, possessing the ability to balance thoughts and feelings in family and casual relationships.

During stressful periods however, her behavior is frequently directed by emotions. She is sometimes unclear about how she feels and what she believes, experiences conflict between emotions and reason, which will usually immobilize her behavior. Additionally, she sometimes experiences internal emotional reactivity and struggles to think with clarity when dealing with overly demanding or controlling people.

Emotional Reactivity.

Although Sandra does not describe herself as an overly emotional person, she experiences a lot of emotional reactivity, both internally and externally. Under stress she is emotionally driven which tends to prevent her from thinking clearly. She states that she is overly sensitive to criticism, is uncomfortable when someone is upset with her, is sensitive to being hurt by others, worries about personal impressions, and has been known to dwell all day on an argument she has had with her spouse. She states that she feels emotions deeply and at times as if she is on an emotional roller coaster. She always withdraws from a close relationship when feeling disappointed.

I Position.

During non-stressful periods, Sandra is moderately self-accepting, and due to her Christian belief system, she has a strong sense of doing what is right regardless of other's opinions.

Sandra does not remain calm under stress and such circumstances produce anxiety causing her to feel emotionally unstable. Further, it leads her to question who she is as a

person, allowing her self-esteem to be influenced and determined by what others think about her. When feeling anxiety during an argument she has difficulty separating thoughts about the issue from feelings for the person.

Emotional Cutoff.

While Sandra deeply loves her nuclear family, she has some difficulty expressing her feelings to people close to her. She feels inhibited around extended family, which prevents her from asking them for emotional support. When she perceives that friends and extended family are getting too close to her, she feels uncomfortable and tends to distance herself, and even feels the urge to run from intense relationships.

Fusion.

Sandra states that she is not emotionally attached to her parents and she does not deem it important to maintain a close relationship with them. Arguments with her parents can still leave her feeling anxious. Sandra does not seem to be well-differentiated from her parents, as acceptance and approval are of paramount importance to her. While she has a need to feel included as an integral part of her family and friendships, she continues to distance herself when threatened by intimacy. Similar to Keith, when they are apart for long periods she states she feels that she is missing a part of herself.

Emotional/Spiritual Maturity.

Sandra is an emotional adult in the 'general formation and discipleship' area, indicating she feels confident of her relationship with God through Christ, she enjoys worshipping God alone or in fellowship with others, has identified and is currently using her God-given giftedness, and is able to integrate her Christian beliefs and values in her everyday life.

There are three areas where Sandra is an emotional adolescent: (1) looking beneath the surface, (2) breaking the power of the past, and (3) making incarnation her model for loving well. This is evidenced through difficulty identifying and honestly exploring the doubt and pain that currently lie beneath the surface, and processing anger in a healthy way. She sometimes resorts to a less healthy conflict resolution style she learned in her family of origin, and will only sometimes acknowledge and process the impact of past traumatic life events. Because Sandra is fearful of deeply emotional relationships, she tends to distance herself emotionally.

Sandra is an emotional child in three areas: (1) living in brokenness and vulnerability, (2) receiving the gift of limits, and (3) embracing grief and loss. This is evidenced through (1) self-protection, not letting others see the hurt and pain she feels, (2) unhealthy boundaries, resulting in an imbalance of work/church/life, and (3) unresolved loss, not allowing herself the time and space necessary to identify and feel disappointment.

Cathy

Cathy is a 15-year-old teenager learning to balance freedom with responsibility. The most challenging aspect of family life for Cathy at this stage is her perception that she has less freedom than her peers, for example, her curfew.

She is introverted, has many acquaintances and a few close friends. She became a Christian when she was 10 years old, baptized at 12, and is quite involved in the youth group at church. Cathy has creative abilities evidenced through her photography skills coupled with her technical and electronic knowledge and understanding.

Differentiation.

In terms of intrapsychic differentiation, Cathy appears to be well-differentiated with the exception of only prolonged stressful periods, when she experiences anxiety and tends to behave in a way marked more by emotions than cognitive processes.

Interpersonally, she is developing the ability to experience autonomy while maintaining intimacy with her family. Evidence of this dynamic is her recent decision to become a vegetarian, wherein she was able to express herself and her opinions with assurance and confidence, and behave in an assertive manner. Acceptance in the family is important for Cathy, and fortunately, while not everyone in the family agreed with her decision, they were able to provide support and communicate acceptance.

Emotional Reactivity.

She neither perceives herself nor is perceived by others as overly emotional in thought or behavior. Generally, she does not abandon her cognitive processes for emotionality and does not dwell on arguments. While she is not overly sensitive to criticism, she does feel uncomfortable when someone is upset with her, and hurt by others' insensitive words and actions. When feeling disappointment from a significant person, her tendency is to withdraw.

I Position.

She tends to remain calm and free from anxiety even during stressful situations. Cathy is able to accept herself, maintain her sense of self, and can usually remain true to her convictions in the face of adversity and difference. However, during an argument, anxiety influences her wherein she may experience difficulty separating her thoughts

about from her feelings for others, and may allow her self-esteem to be dependent on other's perceptions.

Emotional Cutoff.

Because Cathy feels accepted by family and friends, she is able to express true feelings to them and is not fearful of closeness or losing her identity in intimate relationships. She realizes the value of conversing, resolving issues, and reconciling relationships. At this stage in her life, she prefers to depend on her friends for emotional support rather than her family.

Fusion.

Cathy values family relationships and maintains a healthy attachment to her parents. Because arguments with family members can leave her feeling anxious, conflict resolution is important to her.

Emotional/Spiritual Maturity.

Cathy is an emotional adult in five of the seven areas. These include (1) general formation and discipleship, (2) looking beneath the surface, (3) living in brokenness and vulnerability, (4) embracing grief and loss, and (5) making incarnation her model for loving well. This indicates that she loves to worship God alone and with others, regularly enjoys fellowship, and acknowledges that God is in control of her life. She values quiet reflection with God and is open to exploring areas of her life that He wants to transform, and she has the capability to identify, share, and process emotions alone and with others. Able to openly speak about her weaknesses and failures, admit when she is wrong, and ask for forgiveness, she is open to constructive criticism and is not easily offended. Cathy

is not fearful of her emotions, and takes the time and energy required to process them and allow God to work in her through the experience.

Cathy is an emotional adolescent in the remaining two areas of “breaking the power of the past” and “receiving the gift of limits”. This translates into Cathy being able to take responsibility for her behavior, resolve conflict in a healthy manner, and generally balance school/work/church/life dynamics.

Cathy, as the least fused child, seems to have developed a higher lever of differentiation than her parents. According to Bowen Family Systems Theory, Cathy is likely to marry an individual of similar differentiation level whereby, through the multigenerational transmission process, will contribute to higher levels of differentiation in future generations.

Lisa

Eleven-year-old Lisa is an intelligent, caring, and sensitive individual, who seems intuitive. She became a Christian at 6 years of age, was baptized at age 9, and remembers both events fondly and with clarity.

It is important for Lisa to know and feel she is included and loved in her family, and to know they are available to comfort her when she is feeling anxious. It appears that Lisa is the most fused child in the family. The most difficult aspect of family life for her is supporting family members in decisions she may not necessarily agree with, for example, Cathy’s decision for vegetarianism.

Alec

Alec, a chatty 7-year-old boy, is a very creative individual. This creativity is evidenced in his artistic abilities, which include drawing pictures, writing books, and

assembling building kits and construction sets. He became a Christian this past summer at vacation bible school. Alec states that the best part of being in this family is being included, loving others and feeling loved.

Family

Rules

Systemically thinking, the Brown family is explicitly and implicitly rule organized, and operates within the family system's zone of tolerance. The purpose of family rules is to maintain homeostasis. Some of the explicit Brown family rules focus on their Christian belief system in terms of attitudes and behaviors while implicit rules tend to involve emotionality processes within relationships.

Roles

Family roles, organized by rules, tend to be triggered during anxious periods. They provide a sense of being connected to the family through verbal and non-verbal interactions. As well, their purpose is to maintain homeostasis through feedback loops. The role that Keith portrays is somewhat of a computer. While he is not emotionally disconnected from his nuclear family, he does prefer to resolve issues through problem solving and cognitive processes rather than engage emotionally with his family. Sandra's roles include functioning as a gate keeper in terms of controlling what information flows in and out of the family system, and as operator with regard to how that information flows. Cathy, the oldest in the sibling sub-system, while not a rebel or problem child, has challenged family rules, contributing to paving the way for younger siblings. Lisa is to some extent the shining star due to her academic skills and aptitude coupled with her caring characteristics. However, she is not idolized within the family system as the ideal

for other siblings. Alec, the youngest child in the family system, functions as the distractor in conflictual situations in an effort to divert tension.

Communication

There are two levels to communication, verbal and non-verbal. The verbal level is the content or the actual words spoken, and non-verbal level includes tone of voice, body language, and facial expression. The basic assumption is that the non-verbal level provides the information needed to interpret the verbal level. The three principles of communication are (1) one is always behaving because it is impossible to do nothing, (2) every behavior carries a message, therefore one is constantly communicating, and (3) the meaning attributed to a given behavior is not necessarily the true meaning of the behavior. Problematic behavior is managed through feedback loop communication. For example, when Alec is behaving contrary to what family rules dictate, Keith may communicate on the verbal level by instructing Alec to behave differently, or may communicate on the non-verbal level by giving him a certain glance directing him to change behaviors, which Alec understands and responds to in some fashion.

Triangulation

One of the basic triangulations in the Brown family happens when there is conflict between Keith and Sandra regarding Cathy's freedom to spend time talking with her friends on the telephone. While Sandra and Cathy tend to grow closer in this situation, Keith and Cathy tend to distance themselves. Another triangulation example occurs when Sandra does not communicate plans clearly to her daughters; Cathy and Lisa tend to grow closer and distance from Sandra.

The most obvious example of triangulation in the Brown family is among Sandra, Keith, and his mother, Joan. Keith's brother Brad is clearly favored by Joan. Family gatherings are organized around Brad's availability when clearly, according to Keith, that would not happen for any of the other children. This creates conflict between Joan and Sandra, which leaves Sandra feeling hurt as a result of Joan's insensitive behavior. Keith acknowledges this family dynamic without showing any emotion, supports Sandra, and distances himself from Joan.

Diagnosis

Keith

Axis I: V71.09 (No clinical syndromes or developmental disorders)
 Axis II: V71.09 (No personality disorders)
 Axis III: No general medical conditions
 Axis IV: None
 Axis V: GAF = 82 (current)

Sandra

Axis I: V71.09 (No clinical syndromes or developmental disorders)
 Axis II: V71.09 (No personality disorders)
 Axis III: No general medical conditions
 Axis IV: Problems with primary support group (parents)
 Axis V: GAF = 82 (current)

Cathy

Axis I: V71.09 (No clinical syndromes or developmental disorders)
 Axis II: V71.09 (No personality disorders)

Axis III: No general medical conditions

Axis IV: None

Axis V: GAF = 81 (current)

Lisa

Axis I: V71.09 (No clinical syndromes or developmental disorders)

Axis II: V71.09 (No personality disorders)

Axis III: No general medical conditions

Axis IV: None

Axis V: GAF = 81 (current)

Alec

Axis I: V71.09 (No clinical syndromes or developmental disorders)

Axis II: V71.09 (No personality disorders)

Axis III: No general medical conditions

Axis IV: None

Axis V: GAF = 81 (current)

On-Going Issues and Challenges

Overall, Keith and Sandra have a good marriage relationship and enjoy a happy but busy family life. While they express a deep love for one another, and generally experience a satisfactory relationship, they openly acknowledge that there is room for improvement in their marriage. They realize that a more emotionally honest approach to communication would enhance their relationship in both stressful and non-stressful situations. Although they have previously endeavored to achieve more effective

communication, they have not met with success and realize they default to previous communication patterns.

While they are able to resolve some of the marital conflict, there are particular areas that remain unresolved. This is partially due to differentiation and fusion issues for both Keith and Sandra relative to their respective parents, and in part because of differing family of origin systems. Keith and Sandra's family systems contained different rules that currently influence their behaviors and expectations in several areas, including communication, conflict resolution, spending habits and finances, and discipline of the children.

Communication

When feeling anxious Sandra tends to withdraw and distance rather than discuss the issue and express her emotions. This invites Keith to pursue through probing, which results in Sandra eventually disclosing her feelings. This circular dynamic works for Sandra because she interprets his pursuit as love. Keith experiences this dynamic as a chore and wishes Sandra would learn to express her thoughts and emotions openly and in a timely manner. Sandra agrees that she would appreciate learning those skills and realizes the positive impact it would have on their relationship. However, at this point, her natural tendency is to distance and wait for Keith to pursue her.

Both Cathy and Lisa comment on communication problems wherein Sandra, while she has expectations of her daughters, fails to communicate them. For example, when Sandra expects either of them to baby-sit Alec in her and Keith's absence, she neglects to check availability with the girls and expects them to comply regardless, with little notice. The girls argue that because they may have already made plans, Sandra

should ask them rather than tell them, and honor their plans rather than dismiss them.

Sandra believes her parental authority gives her the right to dictate in this manner.

Conflict Management

For Keith and Sandra, their conflict management style is partially successful.

While their arguments are not malicious, not all disagreements end in resolution. They have learned to take time-outs, and only occasionally re-visit the issue in order to achieve resolution. At other times, conflict remains unresolved and ignored after a period of withdrawal and distance, evidenced by the “silent treatment”.

Financial Management

In Sandra’s family of origin she was taught neither the value nor management of money, therefore, she tends to spend more extravagantly than Keith does. As well, during her previous relationship, she and Cathy would go without food for days at a time, and consequently, when she did have money she would purchase eight boxes of cereal at once to ensure sustenance for herself and Cathy. At this point, she will only purchase more than one box if it is sale priced, and then only two or three boxes at once. Her children’s needs are very important to her and the overspending tends to be related to them. It is interesting that Keith describes Sandra’s spending as less careful because he seems to fall into the spending trap for an altogether different reason. When Sandra mentions, even in passing, she would like a certain item, he purchases it even if it means going into debt because it is important to him that she have what she desires. This makes him feel that he is caring for her properly as the provider. In essence, it seems they both are capable of overspending but for different reasons; the disparity being that Sandra is oblivious to the

financial strain while Keith experiences anxiety and stresses over it without sharing his concern with her until it reaches a point of conflict.

Discipline of the Children

Keith and Sandra have a difference of opinion in the area of discipline. Again, this difference seems to be a result of what they learned in their respective families of origin. Keith is inclined to mete out a harsher discipline than Sandra. While this does not cause an inordinate amount of disharmony, it nevertheless remains an unresolved issue, and invites triangulation with the children.

Differentiation and Fusion

Neither Keith nor Sandra appears to be well differentiated from their respective families of origin. Keith can apparently function and have values outside of the family of origin influence but he does not seem to have an emotional connection with them. Due to unresolved disappointment with his parents, especially his mother, Keith is emotionally cutoff from them. In terms of intrapsychic differentiation, he struggles with attaining cognitive and emotional balance when feeling anxious.

When anxious, Sandra experiences conflict between emotions and reason, and struggles with cognitive clarity, sometimes to the point of immobilization. She is emotionally reactive, does not maintain the I position, and cannot remain emotionally connected to her family of origin without some degree of fusion.

Treatment Plan

The underlying assumptions and values of the proposed integrated model for marriage and family therapy suit this family's needs. Using the systemic ideology from both Family Systems Theory and Bowen Family Systems Therapy together with a

biblical understanding of persons affords a comprehensive view of behavior, and focuses deeply into the hearts and minds of individuals as well as provides a broader context that recognizes influences and impact from the family system. This model acknowledges that individuals remain influenced by their family of origin even after they leave home, whether or not they marry and have families of their own. Similarly, the biblical understanding of persons correlates with this idea wherein it acknowledges sin's unremitting influence and impact on persons and relationships. Therefore, until individuals can differentiate from their families of origin, finding that balance of individuality and togetherness, they are living with unfinished business and unresolved issues affecting their everyday lives. Regarding the effect of sin on their lives, salvation and sanctification are readily offered to all from a gracious and loving God.

Basically, the focal points of this integrated model are process, patterns of emotional response, and the interconnectedness and triangulations in the family system. The purpose of therapy is to increase differentiation and decrease anxiety.

Problems are perceived as systemic rather than individualistic, therefore personal change is accomplished as a result of systemic change. Humankind as relational beings, are only known, and know others in and through relationship.

The counseling process in this modality is interactive and cooperative in nature. While joining the couple in counseling, the therapist must remain neutral and not be perceived as siding with either partner. The therapist's task includes being respectful of clients, remaining detriangled from the couple emotional system, asking process questions that serve to educate the couple on the functionality of the emotional system, and modeling differentiation in the session. Additionally, the therapist sometimes takes

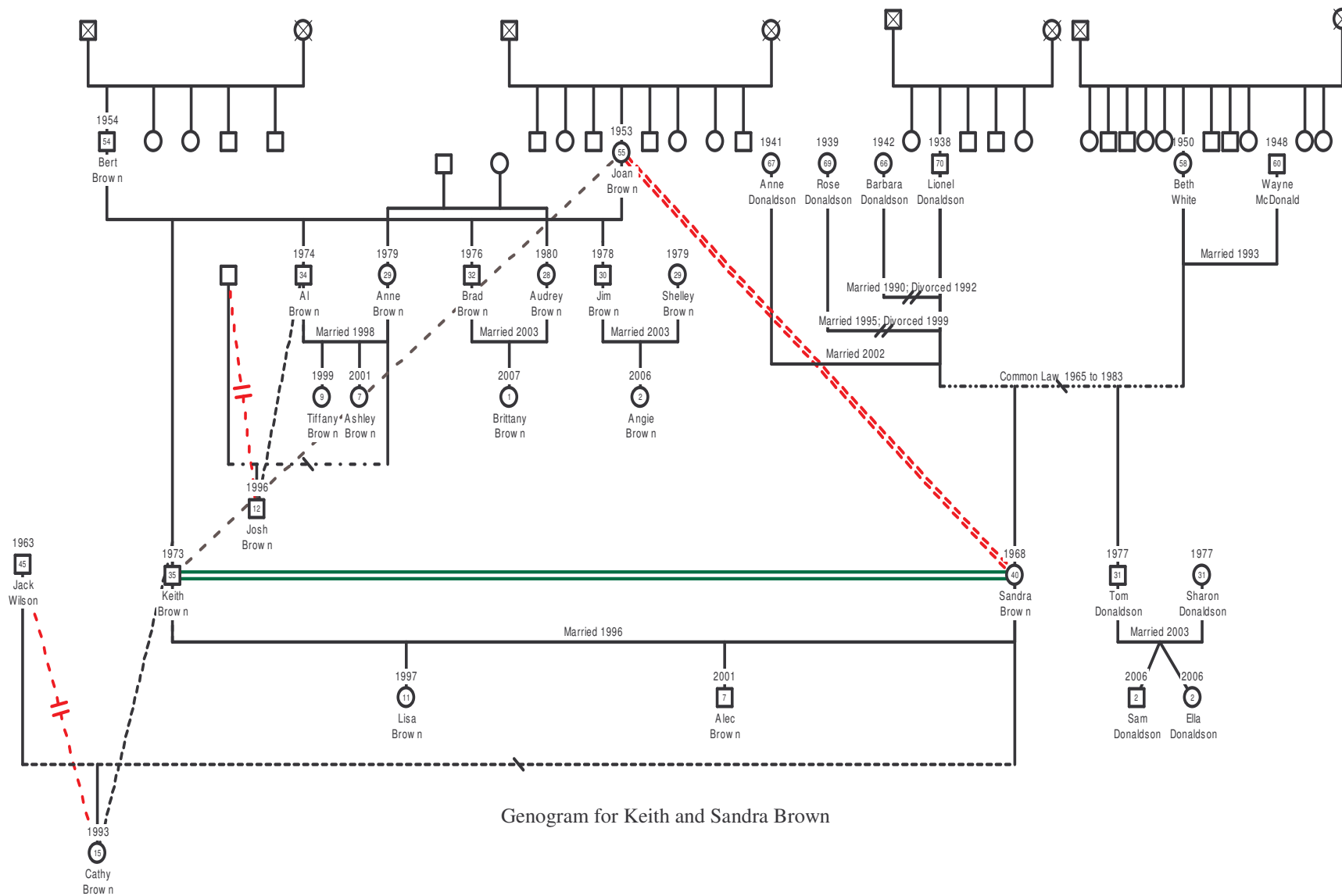
on the role of coach in order to prepare the client to return home to process unfinished business.

Keith and Sandra have a high degree of complementarity, as well as commitment to each other and the marriage. However, communication, conflict management, disciplining the children, financial management, and emotional reactivity are issues that need to be addressed in counseling. Both Keith and Sandra need to differentiate from their respective families of origin, detriangulate, and deal with their particular emotional cutoffs. This will decrease anxiety, increase intimacy, as well as positively impact the nuclear family emotional process and the family projection process.

Both Keith and Sandra's family of origin system dynamics need to be discussed and understood, which can be done in conjoint sessions. It will be necessary to teach the couple about system dynamics including differentiation, triangulation, and emotional cutoff, and identify the behavioral patterns and themes prevalent in their lives. Teaching and encouraging them to recognize the triangles, discussing ways to detriangulate, and eventually coaching them to visit their families of origin will be integral aspects of the therapeutic sessions.

Keith and Sandra will also benefit from spiritual counseling wherein they can mature both emotionally and spiritually. Areas include general spiritual formation, and emotional components such as looking beneath the surface, embracing grief and loss, and breaking the power of the past. There may be some overlap between the spiritual counseling and the sessions addressing differentiation of self.

Counseling would be conjoint, and held for a period of approximately five to six months, beginning with weekly sessions that would later change to biweekly.



Genogram for Keith and Sandra Brown

Chapter 5

Conduct and Progress of Therapy

Introduction

The therapist's role, couple tasks, therapeutic goals, including emotional and spiritual, and conduct of therapy are the emphases of this chapter. Personal learning factors and a summative statement are included.

Therapist Role

More important than knowledge of techniques, an understanding of family system dynamics in terms of functionality, structure, processes, and circular causality is integral for the therapist. If the therapist has previously done personal family of origin work, it will help immensely by lessening the potential for the therapist to participate unwittingly in unhealthy and unhelpful emotional reactivity and triangulation in session. To prevent from being triangulated in the couple's pursuer/distancer dynamic, the therapist should not pursue the distancer, and should help the pursuer explore the internal loneliness and perhaps barrenness that impels the individual toward the behavior.

It is imperative that the therapist remain detriangled from the couple's emotional processes. While it is neither helpful to the couple nor is it the therapist's function to settle their disputes, it is the therapist's role to enable and empower the couple to acquire skills to accomplish conflict resolution. By remaining detriangled, this compels the couple to work toward resolution and reconciliation.

The therapist engages the couple through process questions, which have a slowing down effect, and therefore contribute to moderating and perhaps restraining emotional reactivity. Through this, the couple is encouraged to express ideas, thoughts, and

opinions, as well as cognitively articulate their feelings rather than express them emotionally, in the hope of maintaining an easygoing and meaningful emotional climate, rather than encouraging quick tempered and easily incensed responses. When couples are able to discuss feelings calmly, they are encouraged to speak directly to one another. However, when emotionality overrides or precludes the thinking process, they are instructed to converse directly with the therapist one at a time, while the other partner listens to the dialogue. As well, the therapist's questioning changes in an effort to evoke thinking processes in order for the client to articulate the particular feeling rather than strictly express it emotionally. For example, if the individual speaking begins to cry, the therapist inquires about the preceding thought that triggered the tears. This exchange diminishes emotional reactivity and helps the listening partner actually hear what is being verbalized, perhaps for the first time. This dynamic also helps the clients realize that communication and change require both speaking and listening. If the couple continues to argue and refuses to listen, another strategy to engage reason during an emotional outburst is to ask for particular depictions of the event being discussed. In the event that the couple continues to express conflict, and will not honor one another by listening while the other is speaking, the therapist will suggest individual counseling for both until such time when they can appreciate and show consideration and respect for their partner.

When in conflict, it is comfortable and usually effortless to identify the partner's contribution to the couple problem; this is referred to as content. The therapist needs to help partners identify, recognize, and understand their involvement in and contribution to the problem, which is the interactional process. Hopefully, this will lead them to take

responsibility for their part, and encourage them to think about how they can personally change and therefore contribute toward a solution.

The therapist employs and models the I position in session, clearly delineating an autonomous position relative to the couple, which in turn assists them to confidently assert and convey their individual thoughts and opinions and behave accordingly in a well-differentiated manner.

Essentially, the therapist, by remaining detriangled, using a calm tone and asking process questions, bypasses the emotional reactivity while engaging the client's cognitive domain. This is helpful for the clients as individuals insofar as achieving intrapsychic differentiation relative to balancing thoughts and emotions, and as a couple in terms of learning to listen actively and effectively to one another.

Couple Tasks

For this couple, Keith and Sandra, their inability to maintain a cognitive and emotional balance under stress and their unresolved emotional attachment to their parents indicate intrapsychic and interpersonal undifferentiation, and their denial of the importance of maintaining an emotional connection with their families of origin indicates emotional cutoff.

Therapeutic Goals

The overall goal is to reduce anxiety and increase both intrapsychic and interpersonal differentiation, which should result in less fusion and emotional reactivity. In order to accomplish this, the course of action will focus on several therapeutic processes. These include (1) definition and clarification of the spousal emotional process, (2) education regarding emotional system functionality, and (3) an understanding of

family systems processes including of family of origin influence in terms of both past and present impact. Family of origin work will be accomplished through the use of genograms and discussion, identifying themes and patterns, which will enable them to identify triangles, de-triangulate, and resolve emotional cutoff by increasing intimacy while decreasing emotional reactivity. Family of origin visits for both partners will allow them to live out their differentiation in the context of their families of origin.

Emotional/Spiritual Goals

Together with the therapeutic goals mentioned above, it will be beneficial for Keith and Sandra to simultaneously direct their focus toward emotional and spiritual growth in terms of functioning as emotional adults as outlined in the Emotional/Spiritual Health Inventory (Scazzaro, 2003). Some of these areas can be addressed concurrently with differentiation, items such as identifying and articulating emotions, learning to express anger in constructive and productive ways, resolving family of origin issues without triangulation, and discovering the reasons they both tend to overextend themselves.

Goals categorized as spiritual basically include their individual relationships with God, and the lack of regular and quality time allotted to spend with God reading the Scripture, and in prayer and quiet reflection, as well as inviting and allowing Christ to transform them. Implementation of couple and family devotional times would also be considered as goals.

Conduct of Therapy

Prior to meeting with the Brown family, three assessment tools were given to Keith, Sandra, and Cathy to complete. These were the Emotional/Spiritual Health

Inventory (Scazzaro, 2003), the Chabot Emotional Differentiation Scale (Licht & Chabot, 2006), and the Differentiation of Self Inventory (Skowron & Friedlander, 1998). It was deemed by the therapist that Lisa and Alec were not at an age that allowed them to complete these inventories; therefore, an assessment would have to be done during the intake session.

Session One

In the initial session, all five members of the Brown family attended and participated. It was noticeable that each family member had a voice, and for the most part, were comfortable presenting differing opinions. The therapist, while completing intake forms and listening to the presenting issues, assessed the family in terms of roles, rules, triangles, differentiation levels, and fusion. As the couple articulated their reasons for attending family counseling, the therapist deemed that counseling would be most effective if the parents, Keith and Sandra, attended alone, without the children.

Session Two

In session two, the initial one for the couple on their own, the therapist greeted both clients, and invited both Keith and Sandra to discuss their communication and conflict resolution issues. Sandra initiated by indicating they recently have had a number of arguments that remain unresolved. Pursuant to these arguments, she generally feels upset for a number of hours and, when at work, experiences difficulty with concentration. Keith agrees with Sandra's comments and states that they would attain resolution in these arguments if she could, in the moment, enter into a rational discussion rather than distance herself.

Most of the session included discussion about this type of interaction, with the therapist, being more interested in the process rather than the content, inquiring about thoughts and feelings during an argument, and the circular dynamic that typically ensues. The clients were able to engage in conversation without expressing much emotion. From their recounting, it became apparent to the therapist that both Keith and Sandra experience difficulty with intrapsychic differentiation during an intense argument rendering them unable to balance cognitive and emotional domains, resulting in distance and immobilization. Toward the end of the session, as the therapist was recapping and inquiring about their experience in counseling, the couple agreed they were comfortable exploring ways to resolve issues in a healthier manner.

Sessions Three to Five

Over the course of the next three sessions, the therapist assisted Keith and Sandra in identifying their thoughts and feelings during arguments, using specific examples. Initially, the therapist engaged one partner in conversation while the other listened to the exchange. During this time, they each gained an awareness of topics that provoked an emotional response in the other. The therapist was careful to notice and regulate the clients' anxiety levels. Occasionally, Sandra would withdraw emotionally, at which time she would be invited to express her thoughts relative to her feelings, specifically noting which thought triggered her withdrawal response. As Keith was able to listen without interruption, Sandra learned to speak freely about her thoughts and emotions. As well, because he was able to listen to Sandra in this context, he began to differentiate his thoughts and feelings, learning to articulate them well.

Sessions Six and Seven

In sessions six and seven, the therapist reviewed the new intrapsychic differentiation skills they had each attained, and discussion centered on engaging their individual thoughts on the emotional patterns that typify their relationship. For example, how a certain look, sigh, rolling of the eyes, and body language, or combination thereof, can act as stimuli to evoke intense emotional responses in the other. They fully agreed and immediately began recognizing instances when that actually happened. This exercise was instrumental in allowing them to recognize and own their emotional reactivity.

Session Eight

In this session, the therapist inquired if the problems in the nuclear family were similar to problems in their families of origin, and asked if they noticed and recognized any repetitive patterns. Interestingly, pursuant to some insightful moments of discovery, they began to identify patterns in both families of origin, and ways they are somewhat repeating in their own family. Upon realizing the impact of this on their current problems, they agreed that exploring family of origin themes and patterns would be beneficial for them.

Sessions Nine to Twelve

Sessions nine and ten were used to process a genogram for Sandra's family of origin, going back two generations, and sessions eleven and twelve were used to process a genogram for Keith's family of origin. Discussions centered on important events, such as births, deaths, marriages, and divorces, along with the emotional jolts, quakes, and meltdowns resulting from some of these occurrences. Events such as these carry the potential to open or close communication; when they close communication, the issues are

not dealt with but tend to be buried and family cutoff tends to heighten. The themes and patterns, such as divorce, emotional distance and cutoff, strong disciplinary female figures, and men in provider role are noticeable in these families.

The experience of gathering information on family members and establishing relationships with extended family members served as steps toward differentiation for Keith and Sandra. Additionally, learning about how emotional systems operate and exploring them in their own families of origin proved helpful for understanding their own relational patterns.

An important insight for Sandra was when she realized and understood the source of her unfulfilled longing for approval and belonging. This allowed her to achieve more balance in her present relationships. Sandra's relationship with God was instrumental in helping her negotiate this crucial step.

Session Thirteen

The triangle between Keith, Sandra, and Joan was explored. At this point, they recognized their individual parts in the triangle, discussing thoughts and feelings. There was also conversation regarding Sandra either visiting her mother-in-law Joan, or writing a letter explaining her challenges with the relationship. While the idea of the visit was overwhelming, writing a letter seemed like a reasonable idea. She was to write the letter and in the next session, the therapist would help with editing out anger and emotional reactivity.

Session Fourteen

Sandra attended alone while she and the therapist discussed and edited the letter. This was a difficult task for Sandra. Although she wrote the letter, she was not able to

send it to Joan at this time. She was, however, able to identify her role in the triangle and begin plans to de-triangle.

Sessions Fifteen and Sixteen

The content of these two sessions focused on their relationship with God. Realizing their need to spend more time in general formation and spiritual disciplines, particularly spending time in the Word of God and prayer, individually as well as a family, was a joint decision. With God's help, they agreed to address the emotional components of discipleship, where they scored as either adolescent or child, and focus on developing those areas. They decided they would be supportive as well as keep each other accountable to stay on track.

Session Seventeen

In this session, the therapist introduced the idea of visiting their respective parents, in order to continue the differentiation process in their extended families. It was explained that these visits could be short in an effort to help control or possibly prevent altogether emotional reactivity on their part. While not ecstatic about this idea, they agreed they would prayerfully consider it. The therapist suggested they watch the American drama *On Golden Pond* (1981), a film about an adult woman visiting her aging parents. The story explores the relationship between father and daughter during her formative years.

Session Eighteen

They announced their agreement to each go for a short visit; therefore, this session was comprised of coaching and preparing Keith and Sandra for those visits. They received coaching about how emotional reactivity would block their capability to accept

and understand family members, remembering that differentiated persons are able to take a step back, control emotional responses, and reflect upon circumstances and solutions. Recognizing which triangles they are entangled in and deciding not to participate in them, along with being prepared for potential counter reactions from family members to maintain homeostasis were addressed.

Sessions Nineteen to Twenty-one

These sessions were conducted over a seven-week period between visits to families of origin. With the therapist and both clients contributing, the interactions during the visits were discussed, and suggestions were made to assist further differentiation.

The therapeutic goal was to increase the extent and intimacy of connectivity with extended family. For Keith and Sandra, this was evidenced by their relating and maintaining relationship with persons without siding, attacking, or defending, and maintaining the changes despite homeostatic pressure to revert to previous behaviors.

Therapy ended at this point because both the therapist and clients agreed that they had satisfactorily met their goals, realizing that emotional and spiritual growth is a life-long process. Currently, they feel equipped and empowered to proceed on their own.

Reflections on Therapy

Overall, Keith and Sandra made significant changes in terms of intrapsychic and interpersonal differentiation, as well as made progress in de-triangulating in extended family dynamics. Generally, they have accomplished change within themselves, their relationship, and their nuclear family rather than putting the onus on others to change. This is evidenced by their ability to articulate and own their opinions and concerns without blaming others for their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. As a result of these

modifications, the triangulation within the nuclear has also realized change. As their differentiation increased, their fusion decreased, which was noticeable in later sessions through their use of the I position rather than ‘us’ and ‘we’. This integrated model for marriage and family therapy was effective in terms of being functional, informative, and expedient for the Brown family.

Personal Learning Factors

Personally, this project was therapeutic for myself as the therapist in terms of content and process. Because of my tendency to be reflective, pursuant to the therapeutic process I was able to contemplate areas in my life that are less well differentiated both intrapsychically and interpersonally. Realizing that it is God’s desire and my responsibility to effect continuous transformation into God’s image through Christ, this project has highlighted some of those areas he wants me to acknowledge and address.

Professionally, I have gained a greater understanding of system dynamics and differentiation. Specifically, this experience has awakened in me recognition of when I, as a therapist, am being invited to triangle in the client emotional system. In addition, I am more attentive to the role that intrapsychic differentiation plays in both individual and couple processes, as it can appear less obvious than interpersonal differentiation.

In terms of a ministerial application, this project has broadened my biblical anthropological knowledge base and understanding, contributing to a more integrative perspective of the human person.

Summative Statement

Overall, the entire Doctor of Ministry experience has been a positive one. I have increased my knowledge base, developed life-long relationships and friendships, fostered

personal and professional growth in myself, and hopefully have contributed to the same in other members of the cohort. This experience has contributed to increased levels of confidence and competence for me personally, professionally, and in ministry opportunities.

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